

9-1-1986

Evangelical Visitor - September, 1986 Vol. 99. No. 9

Glen A. Pierce

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Recommended Citation

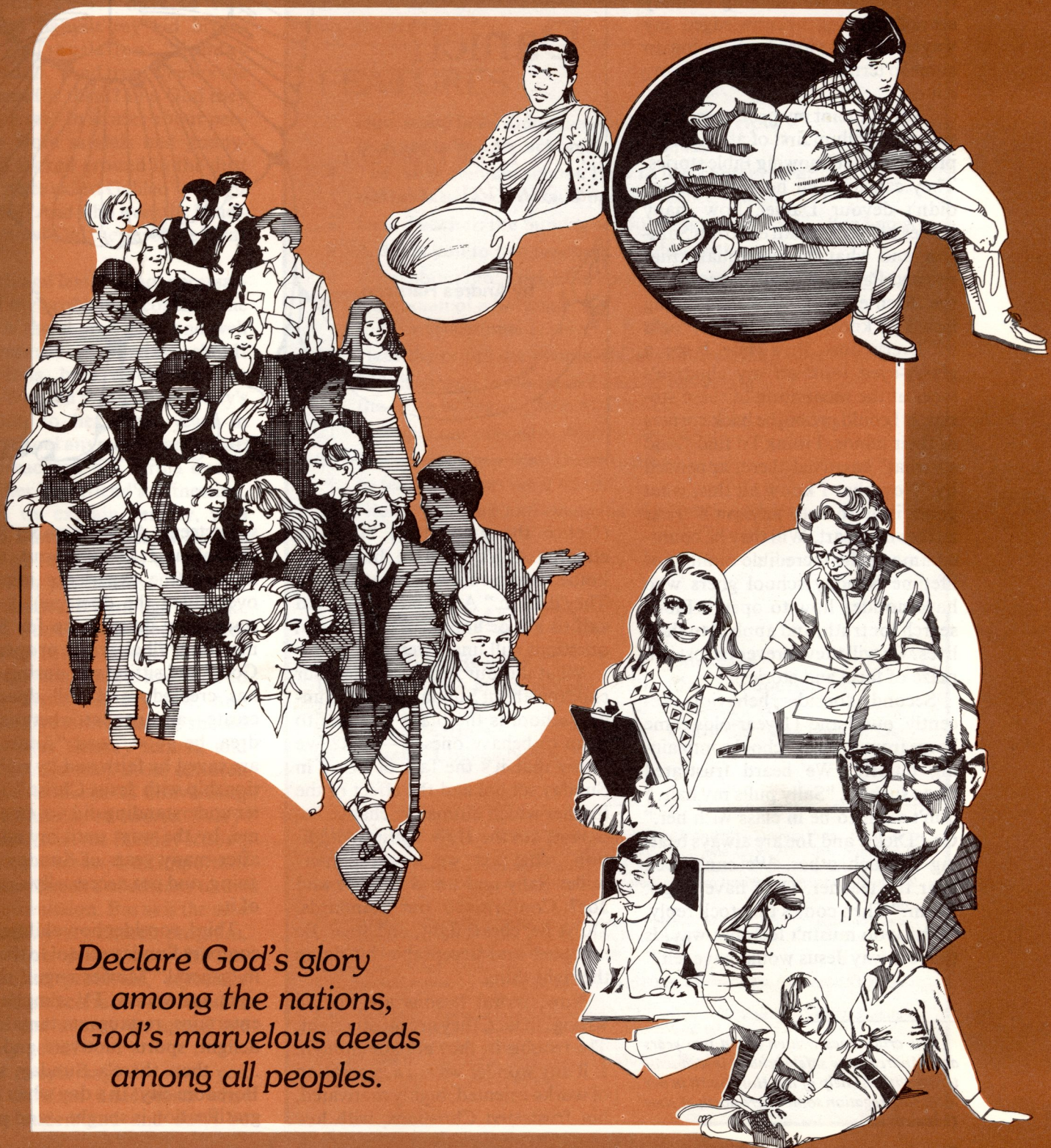
Pierce, Glen A., "Evangelical Visitor - September, 1986 Vol. 99. No. 9" (1986). *Evangelical Visitor (1887-1999)*. 2507.<https://mosaic.messiah.edu/evanvisitor/2507>

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evangelical
VISITOR

September 1986



*Declare God's glory
among the nations,
God's marvelous deeds
among all peoples.*

I've always steered my ship away from the Christian education department. It's not that I don't like children. They're cute; they're refreshing; they're pure (sometimes); they're challenging. I've taught our children in the home. I have college training in education. I'm part teacher, both at heart and by family tradition. So what evil wind blows me far from the job of teaching Sunday school? Having acknowledged my wayward behavior, I am trying to come to terms with it and correct my course.

Let's pinpoint my problems. Consider curriculum first of all. Kids get pretty good at knowing Bible stories. They can tell you how many lions didn't devour Daniel, how many inches of hair Delilah cut from Samson, and what the earthquake that rescued Paul and Silas registered on the Richter scale. It's astounding how kids know the Bible . . . or is it? Every once in awhile I see a glassy-eyed look on my children's faces at the recounting of these stories. If I could probe the back corners of their minds, I think I'd find "And so what" engraved there, appended by "Now that I know all this, what good is it to me, anyhow?" Fear strikes my heart. Will they be counted among the incredible number of lifetime Sunday school goers who have no idea how to open a Bible, search for truth, and apply it to their lives? Or will they forever be lost in a maze of facts and stories?

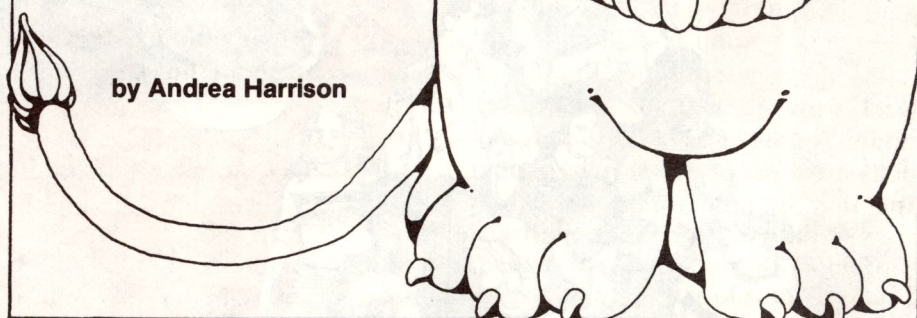
Second, consider behavior. Recently, our 9- and 11-year-olds came home from Sunday school complaining bitterly. We heard frustrated pleas such as, "Sally pulls my hair. I don't want to be in class with her." Or, "Dickie and Joe are always beating up each other. We can't even hear the teacher. Do I have to go, Mom?" Then comes the stock reply, "Why, you mustn't feel that way. Is that the way Jesus would have felt?"

This article was written about two years ago. Andrea, now safely ashore, is seed scattering with the help of the Holy Spirit in her local congregation somewhere north of New Orleans.

How many lions didn't devour Daniel?

(Or, How relevant is Sunday School?)

by Andrea Harrison



(Notice the guilt trip?) "If these children don't learn to behave at home, we must show them at church. They'll learn." A 9- and 11-year-old exit to TV or homework, their real questions still unanswered.

What did our response teach our children about Sunday school? Sunday school is the place to come to learn to behave oneself—right? We imply that it's the fact of being in Sunday school and the effect of the teacher which ultimately change behavior, not the Holy Spirit. In addition, what are we teaching hair-puller Sally and unruly Dickie and Joe? Conform to our standards. Don't lie, cheat, fight, and steal. Be accepted and acceptable by doing the right thing.

Now, moral lessons are not all wrong. In fact, they are mostly right. The trouble is, they are not enough. Is it any wonder we are a generation of works-oriented, highly motivated, but frustrated Christians, with low

self-esteem? As I remember Sunday school and think about what I learned (the experience must have overridden the doctrine), I understand how dressing up for Sunday morning, "behaving properly for God," and sitting still during church has created—and still does often create—an inner battle between "Andrea, be good," and "Andrea, you are saved by faith and by right relationship with Jesus Christ." The latter understanding did not emerge for me, by the way, until my adult life after many years of Sunday school going, and not necessarily as a result of it.

Third, consider how children must compare Sunday school to the world in general. Movies engulf them in sight and sound, TV stimulates and entertains, restaurants tantalize and delight, sports motivate and excite . . . then there's Sunday school. Boredom city! In a day when instant gratification is sought—and provid-

ed—at every turn, how can Sunday school compete?

Our children never actually voice these thoughts. Would they dare? But some kids do, like the ones you pick up on Sunday morning whose parents don't go to church. Hence, the classic 9:00 a.m. telephone excuses: "I have a stomachache this morning . . . Mom and Dad have plans today . . . I have to stay home and babysit my kid brother. . . ." Translation: "Sunday school is dull." And true, where's the excitement for them? In a God they can't even see? In stories about people who wore sandals and gunny-sack and kicked around in the dust of some place called Galileo . . . or is it Galilee? And who were the Israelites, anyhow? Did they ever see "Star Wars"?

Fourth and last (but not necessarily all of my problems), consider the results. Is the church alive and well today because of Sunday school? And if it is, how would we ever know? We can't attribute Betty's conversion to her three years in Sunday school anymore than we can to TV preachers, her hernia operation, or her best friend's witnessing. Nor can we explain Jeremy, who attended Sunday school all his life, married at 18, divorced at 20, and can't hold a job because of all the cocaine he uses. It's enough to make a person want to ask God face-to-face, "What is it all about!"

Now the temptation has been to fold my arms, set my jaw, and determinedly resolve that we should dispense with Sunday school, and hold classes for only those children who show evidence of conversion. That's ridiculous, of course. Everybody knows that the Sunday school, despite its problems, is an important part of the church's obedience to the Great Commission. But as is the case with almost every church program, we ask: How do we live with the philosophical problems, especially the nagging uncertainty of whether the time and energy we spend are doing any good?

Some people say, do what you can; let children understand what they can understand and don't be

evangelical VISITOR

The official publication of the Brethren in Christ Church

September 1986

Vol. 99, No. 9

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EVANGELICAL VISITOR (ISSN 0745-0486) is published monthly by Evangel Press, 301 N. Elm Street (P.O. Box 166), Nappanee, IN 46550-0166. Telephone (219) 773-3164. Member of Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse, a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group. Biblical quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are from the New International Version.

Editor: Glen A. Pierce

Mailing Information: All correspondence, manuscripts and subscriptions should be addressed to the Editor, Evangelical Visitor, P.O. Box 166, Nappanee, IN 46550-0166. Changes of address should include both the old and new addresses.

Single Copy Price: \$1.00 U.S.

U.S. Subscriptions: 1 year—\$8.50; 2 years—\$15.00; 3 years—\$21.00; 5 years—\$33.00. New and Gift: \$7.00. Lifetime: \$130.00.

Canadian Subscriptions (in Canadian funds): 1 year—\$10.00; 2 years—\$18.00; 3 years—\$26.50; 5 years—\$41.00. New and Gift: \$8.50. Lifetime: \$160.00.

Overseas airmail rates available upon request.

Second-class postage paid at Nappanee, IN 46550-0166. Printed in U.S.A.

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worried about the results. Fill the children to overflowing, as if they were pitchers, with "religious" information and experiences and then let God take care of the concoction in his own way. I suppose we can pour in jumbled theology just the way the kids combine 7-Up, root beer, red pop, and cherry cola and call it a "suicide." But do we have any right to expect better results?

I guess if I ever feel compelled by the Holy Spirit and the Christian education committee to teach Sunday school, I will do it. But at this point I would only be comfortable considering myself a seed scatterer or perhaps a soil preparer. Sophisticated curricula, modern education facilities, and progressive human ingenuity are all impressive and are finding their way more and more into our churches. But no one can yet explain the mystery of God's plan for each individual.

No one can predict that one seed will spring up and bear fruit, and another will wither and die. (Perhaps God wants to keep us guessing!) Moreover, we will find no magic formulas, no final exams for Sunday school graduation, no accountability measurements for teachers. In fact, the primary qualification for a good teacher seems to be that he or she lives in constant awe of God's workings among his lost children, and is able to communicate this spirit of belief, wonder, and amazement to students. How could that be dull? Then, if students have eyes to see and ears to hear, the Christian community will witness the miracles of birth and growth.

I'm glad, at least, that people took the time to scatter seed in my direction. I have considerable respect for those teachers who plow on, Sunday after Sunday. What an opportunity for faith and self-discipline. And I'll try to remain open to the Lord if he steers me toward the junior department. But for now, I'd better hope that when that day comes, I can glow like McDonalds' arches, sing like Michael Jackson, pray like Billy Graham, teach like the Apple II, and motivate like a Hershey Bar. Then I might just give it a try. ■

The NEW Sunday school: *How to use contemporary methods to reach today's people*

by Elmer Towns

Steve and Ann Mawdsley were disturbed after they visited their children's Sunday school classes. Steve expected his children would be doing what he did thirty years ago in Sunday school. "The teacher made us behave," he said, remembering how he had to repeat memory verses, sit still, and be quiet in class. But modern children were talking spontaneously and playing in Sunday school.

When Ann Mawdsley heard her children ask if they could stay home on Sunday morning and watch television, she remembered how her Sunday school teacher motivated her to attend. She still has her attendance pins with bars.

But not only have times changed, Sunday school has changed. Attendance seems to be down in certain Sunday schools, but up in others. Dry lectures seem to be out, while expressive learning activities are in. But according to one observer, "The more enjoyable they make Sunday school, the fewer children seem to attend."

Some pastors are concerned when they can't get new Christians into Sunday school classes, and those who in past time were faithful in attendance, now seem to drop out when they get older.

Busing was a dominant outreach ten years ago, but no longer seems effective. Not many care about having the largest banana split in the city or being called the fastest growing Sunday school in their county. Other values are important to Sunday school workers.

There are transformational changes in Sunday school. Some, like termites, are eating away its

foundation. Other changes are strengthening its foundation and assuring its future. Church leaders must realize what is happening, and grab hold of the right ring, or they can get thrown from the merry-go-round. What are these changes? And how should church educators respond?

Sunday school is changing from the "Steeple" to the "Foundation"

The steeple is the most visible part of the church, and in the past, the Sunday school was most visible in its campaigns, buses, and systematic visitation carried on by teachers. But Sunday schools no longer attract a larger attendance than the morning church service.

As a matter of fact, the average worship service has 24 percent more attendance than the average Sunday school. Visitors usually come first to the morning service. After they come into the church by conversion or membership, they are then recruited into Sunday school classes where

There are transformational changes in Sunday school. Some are eating away at its foundation. Others are strengthening its foundation and assuring its future.

they are grounded in the teachings and lifestyle of the church.

1971 seems to be the transitional year when worship attendance passed Sunday school attendance. Prior to that year it seemed that many pastors were constantly encouraging people to remain for the morning service. Now the reverse is true. They are asking people to come early next week for Sunday school.

The old Sunday school adage is still true: "Everyone who comes to Sunday school ought to stay for church. Those who come to church, ought to come early enough for Sunday school. There is a place for both in both. And if both are not in both, there is something wrong with both."

The Sunday school of the future must become the foundation of the church that grounds believers in doctrine and godly living.

Sunday school is changing from the reaching arm to the teaching arm of the church

Sunday school can be defined in four ways:

- (1) the reaching arm,
- (2) the teaching arm,
- (3) the winning arm, and
- (4) the maturing arm of the church.

The Sunday school of the past had a strong evangelistic outreach, primarily through busing and Sunday school campaigns. When I used to ask a church audience how many were won to Christ through Sunday school, many hands went up.

Today, Sunday school is no longer thought of as an evangelistic outreach for the church. Less than 10 percent attribute the Sunday school as influential in bringing people to Christ. Also, teachers do not perceive their primary role as evangelists; not many have a burden to win their pupils to Christ. They perceive themselves as educators.

Recently I conducted a survey in a Sunday school convention of 649 adults. I asked them to respond with a show of hands how many were converted through the influence of advertising. Two percent lifted their hands. Then I asked how many were converted through the ministry of a



David Strickler

pastor. Six percent raised their hands. Next I asked how many were converted through the organized evangelistic outreach of the church. Again, six percent lifted their hands. When I asked how many were saved through the influence of a friend or relative, over eighty percent lifted their hands.

But the Sunday school should not throw in the towel on evangelism. Sunday school can be an effective evangelistic outreach when members network their friends into a Bible study group where they can hear the Word of God and be saved. Then, as a result of lifestyle evangelism and the follow-up of class members, these people are not only won to Jesus Christ, but bonded to a church through the Sunday school.

Sunday school is changing from front-door to side-door evangelism

Front-door evangelism is inviting people into the church where they can hear the Gospel and be converted. This is also called "inviting evangelism," and it implies "event evangelism." This means people are

converted as a result of a sermon or a Sunday school lesson.

Side-door evangelism is reaching people through special ministry to their needs. Statistics reveal that front-door evangelism is not nearly as effective as relationship evangelism, though front-door evangelism will still get some saved. However, as Americans become more concerned about their relationship to one another, side-door evangelism can network friends to the Gospel through classes, cell groups, and special ministries for retarded, deaf, divorced, single parent, or other special needs in the church. The key is to "find a hurt and heal it."

Church-wide evangelistic crusades of the fifties and sixties were a successful means of getting people to Christ. Today, outreach must be specialized. People can be brought under the influence of the Gospel through women's Bible study, recreational teams sponsored by the church, special activities, and fellowship groups.

Sunday school can reflect specialized outreach with some special pur-

pose classes (in addition to the graded classes).

Sunday school is changing from its image of children only to a balance for children and adults

Before 1971, 39 percent of the Sunday school population was adults. But this has changed. Today over 51 percent of the Sunday school population is adults. You can no longer think of Sunday school as only flannelgraph stories; it is also adult Bible classes and fellowship groups.

Now that there are more adults, we should not minimize our emphasis to children, but balance our endeavors to reach and teach adults. One way to balance the outreach to children and adults is to evaluate our

resources. The average Sunday school invests 70 to 80 percent of its budget, staff, and educational space on children, yet adults represent 51 percent of its population.

At a Sunday school convention in North Carolina, I asked approximately 400 pastors their opinion about where their Sunday school was growing. Only six pastors indicated their Sunday schools were growing because of children. Again, six pastors indicated their Sunday schools were growing because of youth. Only four pastors said their Sunday schools were growing because of senior saints' ministry. Approximately 200 said they were not growing. However, over 200 pastors

indicated their churches were growing in the young adult area.

Young adults, ages 18 to 30, have been considered a hard age to reach with the gospel. However, a recent sociological study showed that contemporary young adults are going through many changes, hence they are open to the gospel. These changes include choosing a college, choosing a major, choosing a life partner, choosing a city after college, choosing a job, choosing a place to live, deciding to have children. Usually the process starts over as they again change jobs, homes, etc. These transitions make young adults receptive/responsive people to reach with the gospel. Statistics reveal a large num-

"Dear teacher: the Sunday school depends on you!"

Have you ever stopped to ask yourself, "What would the church be missing if you never taught again?" You might be thinking, "Oh, not a thing." Maybe it's been awhile since you've realized the important role you play in the success of the Sunday school. Maybe you are feeling useless or burned out or stale. Maybe, on the other hand, you know a deep joy and sense a personal satisfaction in giving yourself to this significant task. Whatever your feelings, the fact is, the Sunday School does depend on you!

Think about it. The Sunday school needs you as a crucial link in reinforcing its validity and vitality in helping fulfill the Great Commission—"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."

Did you know that some of the "experts" are asking some hard questions about Sunday School? Listen

to what they're asking:

- If we were starting all over again, would we "reinvent" Sunday school? Why? Are the original needs that led to Sunday school being met somewhere else?
- If a church is effective with home Bible studies, do they need an adult Sunday school program? How do the purposes of these clubs differ from Sunday school?
- How does evangelism fit into Sunday school? Sunday school used to be the evangelism arm of the church. Now it's the teaching arm. Is that healthy? How can we make Sunday school attractive to non-believers?
- In the adult areas, what's the balance between teaching and fellowship?

As a teacher, you are associated with the answers to all of these questions. Am I safe to say that the concept and need for Sunday school is not worn out? Maybe the name

needs some work, but certainly needs are being addressed in Sunday school. You offer quality Bible teaching for children, youth, and adults. Your own spiritual growth is enhanced. People are folded into a loving, caring group. You have regular, weekly contact with students. Just think about how much we need the Sunday school and *you*!

Someone has said that communication equals content plus relationship. If you are going to get a message through, you not only have to have something to say, but you also need a relationship upon which confidence and trust in the message can be built. The Sunday school has the message of the gospel, but it depends on you to establish relationships with your hearers. You need to relate so you can identify and help meet the needs of your learners and potential learners. I know I don't need to remind you that children, youth, and adults come to Sunday school for all sorts of reasons and with all sorts of needs.

- There are the scholars—these people come to Sunday school to study.
- There are people who need other people—community is more important than content for these persons.

ber of conversions in this age group, and they have gone to churches where they have produced growth.

In a recent study on why people choose a Sunday school class, it was shown that they first look for fellowship or attend with friends. Second, they go where they can receive specific help for a felt need. In the third place they choose a class because of a topic, the personality of the teacher, or a specific teaching technique such as films or discussion groups.

Growth-oriented Sunday schools that want to reach young adults should create special classes for them, because it is difficult for new members to penetrate into the fellowship circles of old classes.

Sunday school is changing from an instructional center to a shepherding center

Many are recruited as Sunday school teachers because of their gift of teaching. However, this has a limited scope. If education were the only objective of a Sunday school, then a teacher who has taught Bible content can rightly feel that when his pupils know the lesson, he has finished his task.

However, Sunday schools have a much broader objective. There is a shepherding task that must be carried out:

A shepherd is first of all a leader or an example of the flock. His life-modeling will do more to communicate the gospel than simply telling

Bible stories. Secondly, a shepherd feeds the flock, which involves instruction, questioning, and "hearing lessons." In the third place, a shepherd tends or protects the sheep, which involves the ministry of counseling, protecting, visiting absentees, and making oneself available to talk about problems. (It was Jimmy Bree-land, a Sunday school teacher at the Eastern Heights Presbyterian Church, Savannah, Georgia, who cared enough to come by and take me to Sunday school in his truck. He was a shepherd for my soul.)

A Sunday school teacher is the extension of pastoral ministry into the life of the pupils. Everything the pastor is to the larger flock, the Sun-

- There are the ritualists—these people have always come to Sunday school or at least have been made to come.
- There are the inspiration seekers who primarily need to be "lifted up" weekly.

The Sunday school depends on you because the sensitivity which you have as a teacher to these needs and others will determine whether the Bible lesson is seen as relevant or not.

Your giftedness as a teacher is also greatly relied upon. With the Holy Spirit's enablement, you have a resource empowering you that should give you qualities and abilities that outshine any earthly teacher-student learning experience. You must endeavor to be all you can be as a teacher. Maybe an evaluation by a fellow teacher or superintendent could be helpful in sharpening some skills and abilities that the Holy Spirit is empowering. Certainly, as a teacher, you want to do your best!

I'm sure you would agree that the learning environment the Sunday school class provides goes a long way in determining whether actual learning takes place or not. As is alluded to in the Great Commission, the bottom line of whether learning has taken place or not is whether

there is a response to a lesson. Has a student responded in an act of obedience to God and his Word? Is there evidence of a change in understanding, in feeling, or in action? The Sunday school depends on you as a teacher to use appropriate methods and techniques to keep students interested, involved, and challenged. Relating curriculum to life is a big job! However, with all the resources and helps available, there's no excuse for a boring Sunday school class!

Another reason the Sunday school depends on you is to replenish its leadership and teaching staff. Do you remember Paul's words to Timothy, "And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses, entrust to reliable [people] who will also be qualified to teach others." Words like these point out how crucial your modeling is to those you teach. Not only do you have to model what a good teacher is, but also what good teaching is. If you're anything like me, part of the reason you're teaching is because you admired and respected a former teacher you had. When you think about modeling good teaching, you eventually get around to looking at your own personal life and your relationship to the Lord. How is

your personal Bible study and prayer life? Would you agree with me that you can't give what you don't have?

Let me finish with one more reason the Sunday school depends on you. It depends on you to teach! I'm not talking here about instruction; I've already mentioned that. I guess what I mean is that the Sunday school needs a teacher with a call to teach; it needs a teacher who senses the great responsibility; it needs a teacher who experiences a great joy in teaching.

In the words of J.B. Phillips from Romans 12:7—"If our gift is . . . teaching, let us give all we have to our teaching." As Paul told the Colossians, "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward."

Yes, the Sunday school, more so the Lord, depends on *you*! That's part of his plan. What will your response be?

Signed,
A Teacher

The "teacher" is Ken Letner, Executive Director of the Board for Congregational Life. He does his teaching across the church and in the Lancaster, PA, congregation where he and his family attend.

day school teacher should be to the Sunday school flock.

Sunday school is changing from lectures to Bible study

The key to the healthy Sunday school is "Bible study *with* fellowship." Most think of an adult class as a deacon who lectures to a class of adults in the back of the church auditorium underneath the balcony and speaks in a monotone for 35 minutes, then asks, "Are there any questions?" When there are no questions, the pupils are dismissed for the morning service. This typical class

will not make it in the future, nor will it prepare strong believers for the future.

Recently my wife attended a Sunday school class of 43 adults in the family room of a home in a subdivision in Modesto, California. The question, "Who was Melchizedek?" was the assignment for the morning. The people entered through the kitchen, got coffee, and found a place in the family room. Even before the class officially began, they were sharing what they had found out about Melchizedek. Although a simple topic, it motivated many students to

research and opinion. The class was spent in Bible sharing by many individuals before the teacher finally stood to his feet and began to give his thoughts. My wife said it was an outstanding class because everyone shared. Everyone was interested.

The modern adult Sunday school class must have three things: *First, a coffee pot* that allows people to fellowship before class begins and promotes informality that leads to sharing during the class. *Second, an overhead projector* that allows people to see an outline, read a question, or focus their attention on the topic.

A thank you to two teachers

by Paul Hostettler

Two teachers had a profound influence on my life. One was a Sunday school teacher; the other taught in public school. Through the years it was my intention to thank them. About a year ago I finally got around to it.

My father, Eli H. Hostettler, was one of the preachers at the Sippo Brethren in Christ Church, near North Lawrence, Ohio. He also preached at Geyers Chapel, near Smithville, in my boyhood days. Our family would travel the 25 miles one Sunday each month to the small United Brethren Church.

My Sunday school teacher there in my second and third grade years was "Aunt Martha." She seemed very old, but might have been as young as 35. Even though she touched my life only once a month, she got my attention with her love and her prayers. One Sunday she declared that she prayed for each class member by name every morning and every evening.

Unfortunately, I waited too long to thank her. But I did make a pilgrimage to Geyers Chapel. To my great disappointment, the small brick building was gone; only the cemetery, which had nestled around two sides, remained. I didn't even remember Aunt Martha's last name, so I stood among the headstones and prayed that God would bless her memory—and that he would help me express thanks to my teachers while they were still living.

God answered that prayer. From there I drove to Orrville where Miss Mackey (now Mrs. Amstutz) lives. She was my teacher in a small country school when I was in Grades 2 and 3. She was young, full of life, and loved children. She taught me to read, and like it. I adored her.

Our family moved to another school district and other teachers. Two years later I encountered Miss Mackey at an inter-school activity. She grabbed this shy 10-year-old and gave him a big hug and kiss. My heart pounded with both pleasure and embarrassment.

Mrs. Amstutz met me at the door. The lines of age were on her face, but her eyes and smile swept me back across 50 years. When I mentioned how she had instilled in me an eager desire for reading, she recalled how limited the library in that one-room school was. "I had to beg, borrow, or steal the books for you to read, Paul," she reminisced. I fell in love with her all over again!

When I was ready to leave I "got even" with her for her surprise of a half-decade past. Giving her a hearty hug and kiss, I whispered, "Thanks for being a good teacher." Her husband, standing by, nodded encouragement.

As for my Miss Mackey, a big tear found its way down one of those wrinkles in her face. "You know, Paul," she said with a catch in her voice, "this has not happened to me very often." "And that," I admitted, "is because most of your pupils have not said thanks often enough."

And so, here's to all my teachers, particularly my Sunday school teachers. Here's to you good, godly people who have invested hundreds of hours, yes even thousands of hours, in the lives of boys and girls. A big THANK YOU to each one. And please forgive those of us who haven't managed to express our appreciation. And be encouraged by the fact that our God always notices loving service.

Paul Hostettler is a member of the Grantham, Pa., congregation.

Third, there must be questions to stimulate thoughts, discussion, and involvement. (Even Jesus used questions in His teaching. There are 107 recorded questions asked by Jesus in Scripture.)

The difference between mediocrity and success in Sunday school teaching is involvement of the student in the learning process.

Sunday school is changing from enrollment to the open hand of fellowship

There was a time in the past when enrollment figures were one of the most important statistics in a Sunday school. Most teachers told visitors that if they attended for three weeks in a row, their name would be placed on the roll book. Enrollment was gathered and carefully kept by Sunday school secretaries, and reported annually for denominational records. Enrollment meant that the pupil belonged to the Sunday school and was accepted into its ranks.

Today, many of the major denominations and independent churches have stopped gathering and reporting enrollment figures (except the Southern Baptists who use it as a vital technique in their outreach). As a matter of fact, the most important use of enrollment today is as a mailing list for follow-up and contacting absentees, rather than identifying those who belong to Sunday school.

Perhaps the change in American society is reflected in the change of attitude toward Sunday school enrollment. Most people do not make long-term commitments to bowling teams, a service club, or hobby groups. With fast foods and instant everything, people expect to instantly become a member of a class the first time they attend.

Most Sunday schools offer an open hand of fellowship to anyone who visits the class and try to make him or her feel as much a part of the class on the first visit as any other member. The open hand approach indicates that anyone who attends is a first-class member, just as much as the person who has been there for ten years.

While extending fellowship is

more important than numbers and statistics, we must be careful that this trend does not undermine the importance of making commitments and taking responsibility.

Sunday school has shifted in teaching emphasis from ontology to functionalism

Ontology is the science of being, and at one time Sunday schools were primarily concerned with what a person became. However, modern American life has shifted from ontology to functionalism. Most American people are not as concerned about who a person *is*, as they are about what he can *do*. Following this trend, most adult classes have centered their curriculum on functionalism, i.e., how to balance one's budget, how to get along with teenagers, how to love your wife, and how to discover and use your spiritual gifts. Several years ago the International Uniform Lesson began losing its popularity, as adult classes began selecting short-term lesson topics. Adult classes of four to seven weeks became popular, rather than the traditional 13-week curriculum. Today, classes are allowed to select their topics and many choose functional subjects to help them live the Christian life.

Christian teaching should emphasize both being and doing. A balance in this area is badly needed.

Sunday school can't use yesterday's tools in today's world and be in ministry tomorrow

Some things must never change, while other things constantly pass

away. The mature believer must know what things to fight for, and what things to give up. The Word of God never changes and Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Truth is reflected in *principles* and we must never compromise biblical principles. But programs change because they represent a *technique* to reach people through meeting their needs. When a person's perception of his need changes, the church must use a new program.

The biblical principle of preaching, teaching, soul-winning, and ministry to people never changes. But programs and techniques will often change. The original Sunday school was conducted on Sunday afternoon and taught reading, writing, and arithmetic. But now children have public school for their basic education. Public attitudes have changed toward Sunday afternoons so it is difficult to attract people to Sunday school in the afternoon. As a result, Sunday school programs have changed but not the biblical principles that make it effective.

Does the Sunday school have a bright future? As long as the curriculum is based on the Word of God, people will attend its classes and support its programs. ■

Elmer Towns is the Dean of the School of Religion at Liberty University, Lynchburg, Virginia, and the author of books on Sunday school and church growth. This article is reprinted from FOUNDATIONS: The 1986 Resource Guide for Church Educators and Youthworkers. (SMS Publications, Inc., 701 Main St., Evanston, IL 60202). © 1986 Elmer Towns. Used by permission.

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A 70-minute VHS tape presenting a taste of the 1986 General Conference is available for rental in four Christian Light Bookstores—Chambersburg, Dayton, Elizabethtown, and Upland—and the Bible Book Nook in St. Catherines. Rental cost: \$3.00.

Mail order rental requests (\$3.00 plus postage) and inquiries about purchasing copies of the video tape should be sent to: Evangel Press, P.O. Box 189, Nappanee, IN 46550.

What about those neighborhood children?

by Mrs. C.K. Kightlinger

You've asked the neighbors to church. They don't seem interested. Why not invite their children?

That's the parents' responsibility, you say. I have my own kids to get up and moving, and things are hectic enough around here on Sunday mornings.

Or maybe you are already bringing your neighbor kids and you're getting fast discouraged. "The parents don't care, so why should I?" you say to yourself.

Before you make a decision about "those kids," let me tell you a story.

When I was a child, we lived a mile down a secluded gravel and dirt road. What a motley group we were! Six rowdy boys in assorted sizes and ages and three girls, two dark like their dad, and one light like her mom. Our parents didn't attend church and never could see the value in it.

One Sunday morning the neighbor man drove by. He skidded in front of our house to miss the barrage of gravel shooting across the road. My brothers weren't really throwing rocks at him, just having early morning batting practice. When they stopped the line of fire, the neighbor continued on.

A couple of days later, the phone rang. It was the neighbor man. We were never told what was said in that conversation. All we knew was that next Sunday morning, my older brother, sister and I were told to put on school clothes and were lined up assembly-line style for hair combing.

"You're going to church," Mom said. We raised our eyebrows and looked questioningly at each other and shrugged our shoulders. Then we all looked back at Mom. "That's right, church. Mr. Mears is taking you." I don't know how my brother

and sister felt, but I was secure knowing my older brother was going.

My memory is fuzzy about what happened at that first Sunday school. A veritable stranger took us to a place with more people like him. Strangers. A kindly old woman, who was probably not as old as we imagined, clasped our hands in hers and guided us into some colorful rooms. They told nice stories to us and we colored pretty pictures.

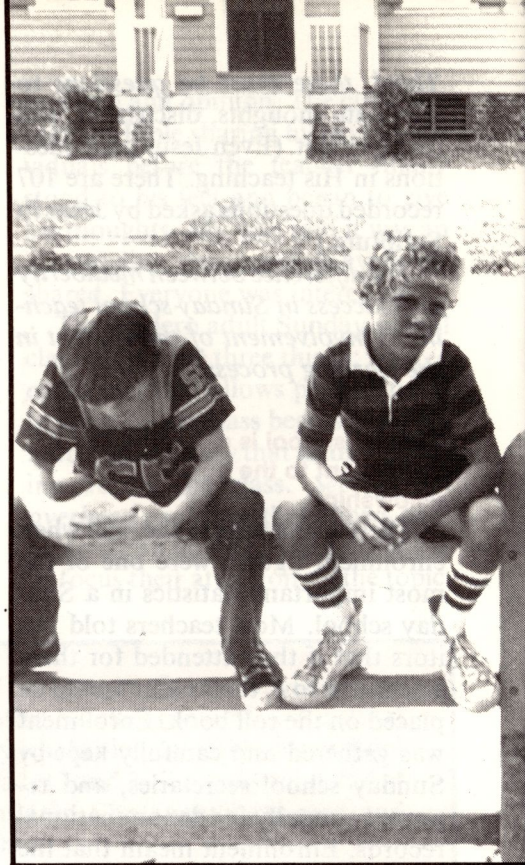
We enjoyed Sunday school for the most part. Good stories, nice people, neat crafts. It was difficult digesting what they said about Jesus dying, but it touched a sweet chord in my sister and I, that he died for us and loved us so. My brother liked church too, until one day he got "too big for his britches" and stayed home. The "in" boys didn't go to church.

My sister and I continued to go and grow, and one special day we became Christians. We knew—we fully understood—how and why we should take this step of a lifetime the way the kindly old lady explained it to us there.

We were so excited, we could hardly wait to tell Mom and Dad. We burst through the front door together, shoving to see who could get in first. "Mom, Dad," we yelled, "Jesus came into our hearts today!"

No reaction. Mom and Dad didn't care. No one had ever shown them how to care about spiritual things. We were crushed. Our baby faith suffered its first beating.

Eventually another man began picking us up for Sunday school and we continued attending another couple of years. We learned a lot and tried to practice what was preached. We even tried to witness the way the teacher said, but no one in the family cared. No one wanted to listen. Finally, we didn't care either. We quit church and Christianity. Another generation passing on its faithlessness.



I don't understand why, but God kept a constant hand on me throughout high school. I remember praying a lot, bargaining a lot, and many were the times I invited him out of my life. But that stubborn, stubborn love hung over me like a cloud. I was away from God as a teen. I had no one to point me in his direction. No one picked us up for church, no one witnessed . . . not until a dear aunt came to know God.

In this huge family of ours, God raised up one quiet-spoken Christian woman. It was a conversion born in sorrow. Yet, like a plant that pokes its way up through pavement, my aunt's faith flourished and she

*When no one else
cared, they cared.
They played Sunday
morning parents to
"strangers' kids."*

The author is a freelance writer living in Saegertown, Pa.



Paul Schrock

grew into a beautiful bloom, an aromatic scent to God.

My aunt's quiet faith stood like a rock before me. The sorrow she endured only served to make her more like God. She rarely judged, only patiently loved. She didn't push. She loved me the way her Lord taught.

She invited me to come and sing at her church when I was a teenager. After my song was over, a woman rose to testify of God's great faithfulness. My heart was warmed, but something kept me from reaching out to God. Like an angler's dream, God gave me enough line to kick and squirm and scream. One day, a year after I married, all the fight and anger was gone. He bid me come. No fireworks, just a reaching up of open hands, with a childlike faith of yesteryear. I had travelled a full circle back to where God had always intended.

Not too long ago, I had an opportunity to visit a neighboring church. My Sunday school teacher there turned out to be the second fellow who had taken my sister and me to church years before. I think he wondered why I had that silly grin pasted on my face throughout class. After-

wards, I drew him aside and introduced myself. He was so surprised! He told me that over the years he had often wondered what had happened to us.

"I would like to share something with you," I said. "My sister and I are Sunday school teachers. My oldest brother realized one day that Christ was the "in" thing. He packed his family up and left for seminary. A younger brother went to a revival, and to my dismay, left without finding the Lord. Two blocks down from the church, he broke down and asked to go back. He found Christ, left for Bible college a year later, and is majoring in missions. A middle brother, after years of struggles, packed his family up and left for Bible college to become a minister."

On and on I continued, telling how grandparents, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, brothers, sisters and in-laws were finding the Lord. He was overwhelmed at the enormity of what God had accomplished in our family—a family that some eight years earlier boasted one solitary Christian.

The man rose during the worship service and gave a moving testimony to the power of God and to his willingness to save. He shared about the visitor and how he had brought her to church as a child. He ended by saying how glad he was that he had taken the time to go out of his way. The church resounded with "Amen" and "Praise the Lord." My voice was one of the many that was raised.

What an awesome challenge for bringing unchurched children to Sunday school! It took twenty years for the seeds sown by two men to come to fruition, but what a tremendous harvest of souls to present to God. I believe those two men are the reason we know Christ today. When no one cared, they cared. They played Sunday morning parents to "strangers' kids."

I also believe those two men hold shares in our ministries. They gave us much more than a ride to church. They raised up a new generation of believers.

Now—what about your neighbor kids?

Daily readings that illustrate ways to love one another.

"Love One Another"

SEPTEMBER

Day	Book & Chapter
	2. Comforting and encouraging others
M <input type="checkbox"/>	1 2 Corinthians 1:3-7
T <input type="checkbox"/>	2 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
	3. Being sensitive to others
W <input type="checkbox"/>	3 Matthew 26:36-45
T <input type="checkbox"/>	4 2 Kings 4:18-31
F <input type="checkbox"/>	5 1 John 3:16-23
	D. Doing Good Deeds
	1. Understanding good deeds
S <input type="checkbox"/>	6 Titus 3:1-8
S <input type="checkbox"/>	7 Ephesians 2:1-10
M <input type="checkbox"/>	8 Galatians 6:6-10
T <input type="checkbox"/>	9 Matthew 25:31-46
	2. Shining as lights
W <input type="checkbox"/>	10 Matthew 5:11-16
T <input type="checkbox"/>	11 Romans 13:8-14
F <input type="checkbox"/>	12 Philippians 2:12-18
	3. Using opportunities
S <input type="checkbox"/>	13 Romans 12:11-14
S <input type="checkbox"/>	14 Hebrews 13:1-6
M <input type="checkbox"/>	15 1 Peter 4:7-11
T <input type="checkbox"/>	16 1 Timothy 6:17-21
W <input type="checkbox"/>	17 James 1:21-27
	E. Discipling
	1. God's example
T <input type="checkbox"/>	18 2 Samuel 7:12-17
F <input type="checkbox"/>	19 Psalm 94:8-15
S <input type="checkbox"/>	20 Isaiah 11:1-6
S <input type="checkbox"/>	21 Hebrews 12:3-11
	2. Discipline as a contribution
M <input type="checkbox"/>	22 Proverbs 9:7-12
T <input type="checkbox"/>	23 Proverbs 25:11-12
	3. Discipline in action
W <input type="checkbox"/>	24 Galatians 6:1-5
T <input type="checkbox"/>	25 2 Corinthians 2:3-11
F <input type="checkbox"/>	26 Titus 1:10-16
	4. Discipline by a church
S <input type="checkbox"/>	27 Matthew 18:15-20
	VI. Communicating
	A. Communicating with Words
	1. Communicating well
S <input type="checkbox"/>	28 1 Corinthians 14:6-11
M <input type="checkbox"/>	29 James 5:7-12
T <input type="checkbox"/>	30 1 Corinthians 2:6-16

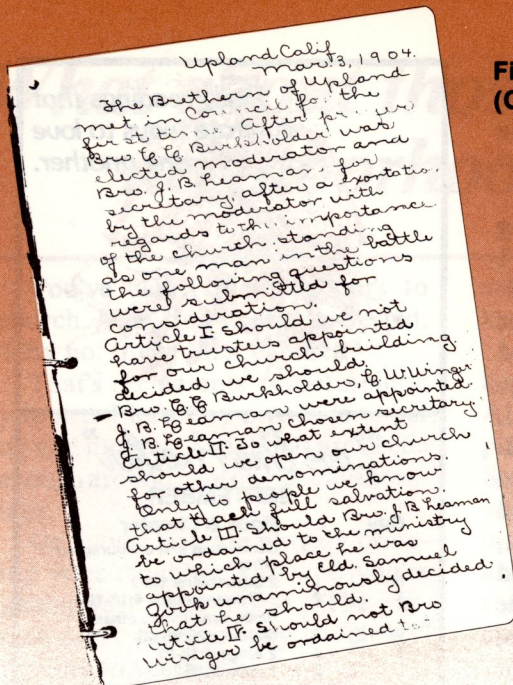
OCTOBER

Day	Book & Chapter
	2. Listening attentively
W <input type="checkbox"/>	1 James 1:12-20
T <input type="checkbox"/>	2 Proverbs 18:13; 21:13; 23:22
F <input type="checkbox"/>	3 Proverbs 22:17-21
S <input type="checkbox"/>	4 1 Thessalonians 2:13-16
	3. Communicating properly
S <input type="checkbox"/>	5 Colossians 3:12-17
M <input type="checkbox"/>	6 Matthew 12:33-37
T <input type="checkbox"/>	7 Acts 4:5-20
W <input type="checkbox"/>	8 Ephesians 5:1-7
T <input type="checkbox"/>	9 Ephesians 5:15-21
F <input type="checkbox"/>	10 1 Peter 3:13-17

This informative outline on interpersonal relationships and all Scripture references are taken from the Love One Another Bible study; ©Churches Alive, 1978, used by permission.

If you find these readings helpful, we recommend the seven-book study series, suited for individual and/or group study. For a free brochure, contact: Churches Alive International, Box 3800, San Bernardino, CA 92413

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P.O. BOX 28, WHEATON, ILLINOIS 60189



First Council Minutes of the Upland (Calif.) congregation, March 3, 1904.

Custodian of a heritage: the congregational

by E. Morris Sider

A past is the precious heritage of every congregation, as meaningful and instructive as the past of any individual, family, or community. How to be good custodians of that heritage should be the concern of all Brethren in Christ congregations.

A congregation may act as custodian of its past by establishing a place for its historical records. In beginning and maintaining a church archives, the congregation must consider several issues.

The first issue is the obtaining of funds. The congregation must be willing to provide a sufficient sum to purchase office and other equipment for an archives and to budget annually for operating expenses. Without this commitment, no congregational archives can begin to fulfil its potential.

Choosing a historian or archivist to assemble and manage the archives obviously needs to be done early. The archivist should be appointed, not elected. Careful consideration should be given to the person's interest in the congregation's history, to competence (potential or proven) in organizing and servicing records, and the ability to hold in confidence sensitive matters that may be found in documents. In effective programs, the archivist is usually assisted by a historical committee whose members help to determine policies and sometimes assist in collecting archival material.

Another important early decision to

make is the location of the archives. The room or rooms should be large enough not only to hold present records and those obtained in the future, but also to provide space for arranging and cataloguing documents, for persons using the archives, and perhaps for displaying records and museum pieces such as clothing, Bibles, and love feast artifacts. Provisions should be made to maintain the temperature of the room as evenly as possible (ideally around 70°) and to have some humidity control. The archives should not be located in the basement or an upper story unless temperature and humidity is carefully regulated.

Especially in older buildings in which fire controls have not been placed, protection of the contents of the archives from loss by fire should be secured. At the least, this means placing documents in fireproof steel filing cabinets and on metal shelves. A wise precaution against the loss of the most valuable documents, by fire or other means, is to make reproductions and to place originals and the reproductions in separate buildings. An excellent location for the copies is the denominational archives at Grantham, Pa. Copies placed here would not only serve as protection for the congregation, but would also make the documents available for denominational use.

What materials belong in a congregational archives? In the broadest term, anything that will be valuable for official reference and for interpreting the congregation's past to present and future generations. Thus the list of appropriate documents is long. Certainly the work of all administrative units of the congre-

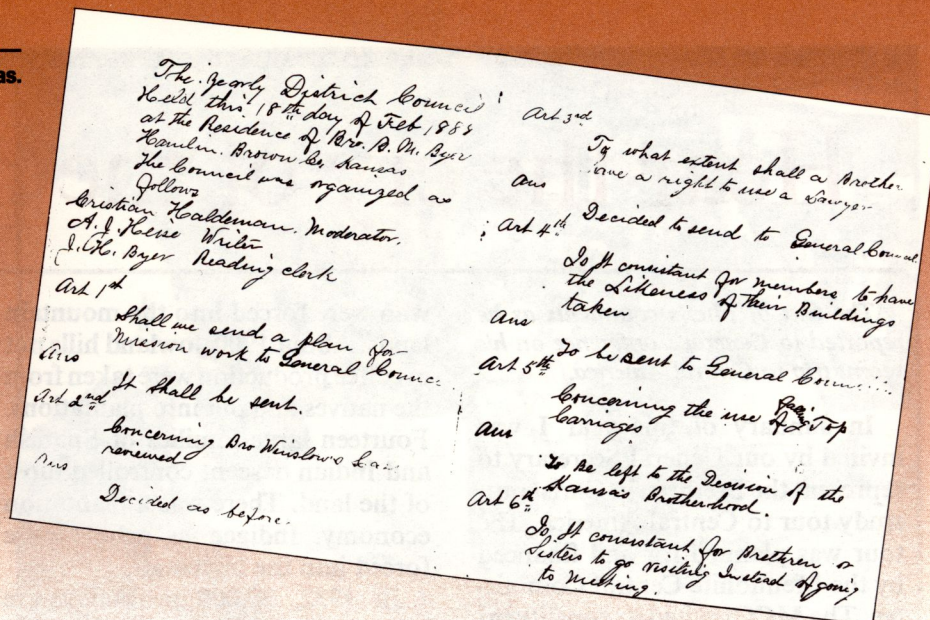
gation should be included—the minutes and reports of the church council, boards, committees, and organizations. Sunday school records, church membership rolls, records of baptism (also of weddings and funerals), legal papers (or at least copies of them), publications (church bulletins, newsletters, etc.), audio-visual productions (tape ministry, oral history, photographs), and sermons are all appropriate, in fact important, documents for a congregational archives to hold.

Very seldom will all of these materials be immediately available to new, or for that matter some established archives. Part of the archivist's task, assisted if possible by the historical committee, is to locate documents, including those that fill the gaps in documents already available or held. A search should be made of rooms in the church, including the attic and the basement, to determine whether documents have been stored in the church building. The archivist should also work with families to make a similar search of members' houses, particularly the houses of those members who once were officers of the congregation (secretaries, ministers, deacons, Sunday school superintendents) and thus at one time responsible for making and keeping records. Documents were once considered to be safer in a house than in a church building. As a result some church documents continue to remain in private hands. Too often descendants have discarded the records as useless, and thus valuable documents are permanently lost.

A major obstacle in the recovery of congregational records may very well be the attitude of some former officers or

Dr. E. Morris Sider is archivist for the Brethren in Christ Church. This is the second in a series of articles.

archives



their descendants that the documents they hold are somehow theirs to keep. Association and length of possession sometimes give such people the impression that they can control what is, in fact, church property. It cannot be too strongly stated that such an impression is without legal basis, nor does it conform to accepted practice in government, libraries and archives, or elsewhere. Archivists, backed by the congregation, should insist that church records be placed under church management and control.

After the archival material has been collected, an organization must be imposed on the documents. Where an archives is already established, standard procedure is to build on the scheme in place. A number of schemes are possible to those beginning an archives; the most serviceable for most congregations will probably be one which is based on the nature of the documents—minutes, sermons, audio visuals, publications, etc. The guiding principle in any organizational pattern is to make the sources quickly available. The archivist should resist the temptation simply to place materials in a drawer or on a shelf without organizing them: most peoples' memories are too unreliable to be able to recall at short notice more than a few documents and their location. A card catalogue reflecting the organization of the collection is, of course, an indispensable aid in locating holdings.

A record should be kept of materials when they first come to the archives, since it may be some time before they are catalogued and shelved. This record, among other things, should note by

whom the items were deposited and the conditions under which they came, such as whether permanently deposited or only on loan, whether restricted in use or not. This record or an appropriate form should be signed by the donor to prevent later misunderstandings.

Paper produced in the last 100 years has relatively short life because of its high acid content. Particularly cheaper grades of paper rapidly decline in quality. Deterioration can be slowed by placing documents in acid-proof containers (file folders and boxes), which are available at many office supplies stores. A good source from which to order these containers is University Products, Inc., P.O. Box 101, South Canal Street, Holyoke, MA 01041. (Ask for their Archival Quality Materials Catalogue.)

Sooner or later papers will come to the archives in need of repair. The temptation to fix them with materials at hand should be resisted. Scotch tape, for example, should be used under virtually no circumstances: special archival tape is available for the same purposes for which scotch tape is normally used. Important books such as old Bibles and bound minute books are best sent to a local expert for treatment and repair.

The archivist should keep in mind that his or her task is not to hide documents, but to encourage people to use them. Too many archivists are overly protective of their organization's holdings. On the other hand, the archivist is also responsible for seeing that the documents are not harmed by readers during use. Documents should remain in the room; there are few, if any, good reasons beyond the need for repair why

they should be removed. Readers should not be allowed to make any marks on the documents. Fragile, and even not so fragile, pieces should remain lying flat on the table or desk when being used.

In such a short article on such a large subject, only general suggestions can be given for the creation and maintenance of a congregational archives. As denominational archivist, I consider it my duty and pleasure to assist congregations in their archival programs in ways beyond the ideas presented here. Additional suggestions may also be obtained in the three sources listed below, all of them readily available from their publishers upon request.*

In the next article in this series, I shall discuss oral history—history obtained through interviews—a valuable and increasingly popular resource for the congregational archives.

**Church History Committee Handbook*. Order from the Historical Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, 901 Commerce Street, Suite 400, Nashville, TN 37203 (Approximately \$3.00).

Guidelines for Local Church Historians, published by the United Methodist Church. Order from the Commission on Archives and History of the United Methodist Church, P.O. Box 127, Madison, New Jersey 07940. (\$3.50)

Service Bulletins, Concordia Historical Institute. Especially helpful are bulletins 2 ("The Congregational Archivist"), 2A ("How to Preserve Vital Parish Records"), and 2B ("Preservation, Filing and Maintenance of Official Documents, Deeds, Church Bulletins and Correspondence"). Order from The Concordia Historical Institute, 801 De Mun, St. Louis, Missouri 63015. (No charge, but a contribution of, say, \$1.00 a bulletin would no doubt be appreciated.)

Hear the cry of the people of Cen

The text of Eber's comments as he reported to General Conference on his recent trip to Central America.

In January of this year I was invited by our General Secretary to represent the Brethren in Christ on a study tour to Central America. The tour was planned for and financed by the Mennonite Central Committee. The MCC invited its constituent denominations and conferences to name a total of twelve persons to share in this experience.

Rich Sider, MCC Central America Secretary, stated the purpose of the tour: "We are committed to an open and honest look at a variety of viewpoints. We want to seek together the truth God has for us in Central America. The human suffering there calls for understanding and action by North American Christians to help bring about peace."

The group of twelve included two Canadians, two Central Americans working for Mennonite agencies and eight persons from the United States. In the first orientation session we were assured by Blake Ortman, MCC Director for El Salvador, that we did not need to be experts. We should hear the people and tell the stories of the people we met.

El Salvador

El Salvador is a small country of five million people. Nearly twenty percent of them live in the capital city of San Salvador. We were immediately impressed by the maximum use of the land, and the density of the population. There are houses everywhere, with small garden plots to the very top of the mountains.

In the early days of the Spanish conquest, all bottom lands were taken from the indigenous people,

who were forced into the mountain lands. About 1900, lowland hills not in coffee production were taken from the natives and put into plantations. Fourteen large families of Spanish and Indian descent controlled most of the land. There was a plantation economy. Indigenous people were forced into the highlands.

In 1932, 30,000 peasants were killed in an uprising protesting land use. To protect themselves, the rich negotiated with the military to control the country and protect them. There were a series of military dictatorships. About 55,000 people were killed in the decade of the '70s—about ninety percent of them by government forces. The government forces swept through the areas raiding, plundering and killing. Twenty percent of the country's people have been displaced. Refugees are now dispersed throughout the country. Currently they estimate that about a thousand protesters are killed each year by government forces.

MCC works in four areas in El Salvador: (1) providing relief for refugees; (2) maintaining a presence with the people who suffer; (3) trying to support local churches who are doing a meaningful work; (4) through an agricultural project, helping mountain farmers develop better agricultural practices.

In a refugee camp of 700 people on the edge of San Salvador, six men told us of the very difficult time from 1982 to the present. The rural population suffers bombing and machine gun fire from the air as the government army seeks to clear the area of civilians because of rebel forces also in the mountains. These bombings destroy houses, crops and animals. One man said, "What we are guilty of is to get food off our land. We want to talk about Jesus and they call that subversive."

The Mothers of the Disappeared,

an organization formed to try to locate missing persons, told us of sons missing for four or five years. They told of husbands being killed, leaving mothers with six or eight children to care for. Others told of their houses being burned. They fled from the countryside to the city. They told us of the heartbreak of looking for years for their children, particularly for sons forcibly recruited—actually caught and recruited for military service. In one case a church group was traveling; the group was stopped; and the teenage boys taken for military service by the army. Women showed us their shrapnel wounds. In the midst of distrust and fear, one woman said, "We go without fear—we have lost our fear."

We listened to the stories of: (1) sisters who worked in the Christian based communities among the people; (2) a Lutheran pastor with a large relief work; (3) the head of the Baptist Federation for the country; (4) rural mountain people; (5) seminary people; and (6) political prisoners in jail. In every case the story was basically the same: suspicion, mistrust, accusations, detention, jail without trial, and sometimes death. The rural people suffer greatly, being displaced and many have been killed.

The Vice Chancellor of the Central American University, who spoke in English and is American trained, told us of the university losing half of its faculty because of the hazards, and that part of their campus was destroyed by bombing. When someone asked him how long the war will last, he said, "A long time. Army officers live in those big houses at the city edge. As long as U.S. military aid is coming, they will see that the war continues. The army has not had a major victory for two years. Last year U.S. aid to El Salvador

Eber Dourte is executive director of the Board for Brotherhood Concerns.

tral America

by Eber Dourte

was six hundred million dollars." That is one and two-third million dollars a day to El Salvador.

The military is very powerful. Jose Napoleon Duarte is the elected head of government and is the link between the army and the U.S. sources of aid. The generals tolerate him, for they are prosperous and powerful.

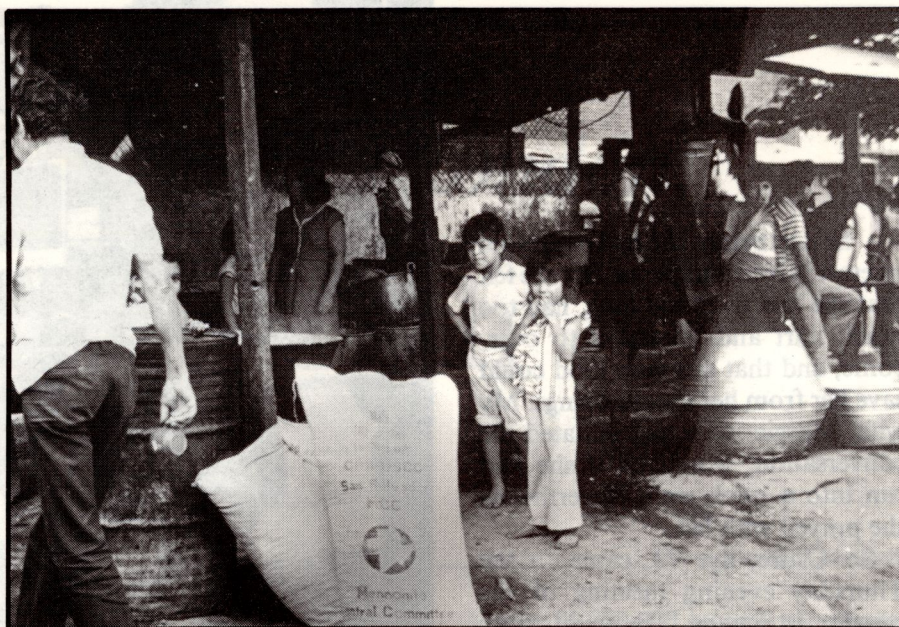
Reports to our tour group out in the mountain areas were the stories of bombings and displacement, fear and poverty. They told of eating chicken at a small restaurant and when they were finished, seeing small boys gather up the bones and take them outside to continue chewing them.

Near the end of the week in El Salvador, a woman informer on TV news named a number of Salvadoran church leaders and service agencies as subversive. She named several persons we had interviewed. Some of our tour group attended the morning worship at the Lutheran Church the last day we were in El Salvador. The pastor stood before his people and said, "You know that this week I have been publicly judged as a subversive. You know me, and you know that is not true. I am not planning to run away and hide. We must stand together and pray for one another." He then asked for prayer that he might have strength to be a shepherd to the people.

In El Salvador the story was the same everywhere we went except at the U.S. Embassy, where the story was quite different. We interviewed two people at the embassy. Each gave us one-half hour of time. Unfortunately, the embassy people don't really believe what is happening to the people at the grassroots level.

Nicaragua

Next we went to Nicaragua. First let me bring you greetings from Poes



Mahlon Newswanger

Mennonite Central Committee corn sent from the East Coast stacked near kitchen in Salvadoran refugee camp. In the background, large tubs which are used to soak corn to prepare it for making tortillas.

and Enrique Palacios. I had a fine visit with them. Enrique specifically requested that I bring you his greetings.

As a result of revolution in 1979, Daniel Ortega is head of the Sandinista government. The government is socialistic with ties to Communist countries. The U.S. government supports the Contras, the rebel forces in the mountains.

The grassroots sentiment in Nicaragua is very divided on what is best for the country. We interviewed seminary professors, Catholic leaders, grassroots people in rural communities, Protestant evangelicals and representatives from CEPAD, a relief and development organization which acts as a Council of Churches for 46 member denominations and 20 additional denominations cooperating in a general way.

There are both Catholic and Protestant groups who feel that the present government is too far to the left to bring peace and harmony to the country. They favor U.S. military aid to the Contras. On the other hand, others like one Catholic leader said that they can live and work with a socialistic government. The Protestant leadership of CEPAD felt that they have influence with the government and would be able to

exert a good positive influence. They already have had significant success in dealing with the government. Persons in prison have been released at their request. They have also been asked to have input in the writing of the new constitution. The President, Mr. Ortega, attended a recent pastors' conference they held and was present at a baptismal service for converts in prison. In fact, he recognized one of the converts being baptized as one of the guards at the prison when he himself was imprisoned. There is a very strong feeling in churches cooperating in CEPAD that they should continue working in the present situation and that the church will be able to survive and grow with the Sandinista government.

Reviewing both El Salvador and Nicaragua, it appears that military aid the U.S. sends is creating more hardship than bringing peace and freedom to either country. We need to be praying for our Christian brothers and sisters there. It is very difficult to walk with God there.

Time does not permit further comment at this time. I will be getting a set of slides and will welcome invitation to share with you in more detail in your congregation. ■

The day before she had expressed interest in receiving Jesus, but she felt that she had lived too long, had too much hurt and bitterness to overcome, and that not even God could save her from her shortcomings. My wife, Margie, who had initiated the conversation, wondered if she had run into a brick wall. Nevertheless she prayed with her.

So Claire, age 73, came to the Thursday evening meeting of the mission in Rugby. The auditorium in the city hall was packed with about 700 youth and adults. As a member of the Ichthus mission team, I gave my testimony that night and spoke of how only God can fill the void each of us has in our lives. I emphasized that if there were people in the audience who still had not met Jesus, they should keep looking for him. Little did I know that that statement was providential for Claire.

On this night Roger Forster, leader of the Ichthus Christian Fellowship in London, preached a particularly challenging message and many people responded. After most of the counseling was finished, Margie noticed Claire sitting nearby with a friend of hers, crying. She approached Claire and asked if there was anything she could do for her.

"Oh, I wish there was something you could do! But I just can't give it up. I'm too bitter, and there's too much hurt," she said.

After Margie listened to her for awhile and encouraged her to cast her cares on Jesus, Claire seemed just as resistant, if not hopelessly depressed. The problem, whatever it was, seemed too great from Claire's perspective. Then she asked Margie to pray for her. As she prayed, Mar-



A London street in Forest Hill.

gie felt impressed to pray for Claire to see a vision of Jesus. No sooner had Margie said this than Claire exclaimed, "I see him! I see him! It's the light of the world! And he's knocking at a door!"

"Would you like to open the door for him?" Margie asked.

"Oh yes! I certainly would!" she replied in the midst of tears.

Margie and Claire prayed together further that evening, and Jesus not only came into her life for the first time, but he also cleaned out years of bitterness and hurt.

Since we arrived in September, we have received an occasional letter asking what we are doing in London. Though they don't happen every day, stories such as Claire's come into my mind when such questions are asked. We are here to create a biblical community that proclaims and demonstrates the truth of Jesus. Somehow Claire had missed this truth all her life.

Yet it is a good question because we do not usually think of England as a mission field. Is not England one of the great Christian nations of the world? Has not England sent many missionaries to other lands for centuries? Is not this the home of John Wesley, William Carey, and Hudson Taylor? The answer to all these questions is yes.

But the England of today is not the same as the England of the past. Although about 70 percent of the population are affiliated with a church, only about 5 to 10 percent actually attend services. About 25 percent of Britons have no affiliation with a church at all. The Church of England, the official state church, estimates that 96½ percent of the population in bulging urban parishes remain unchurched. Moreover, a growing Muslim and Hindu population has brought with it Islam and Hinduism, which have become appealing to many Britons who are searching for meaning in their lives.

For the average Briton, God seems distant and the church increasingly irrelevant to everyday life. Although Christianity is still a part of the culture, it seems to have about as much effect on an individual's life as "mom and apple pie" in American culture. This is a far cry from the dynamic faith of the early church. As P. J. Johnstone has said, "The nation has lost the sense of mission that made it one of the greatest moral and spiritual forces in modern history. The decline of true Christianity and the rise of the permissive society are characteristic of the age. There are now laws that permit homosexuality, witchcraft, and abortion. The rise in the crime rate, immorality,

John and Margie Criswell have been working in London since September 1985. They are ministering as church planters there with Curt and Marti Byers.

The Brethren in Christ in London: Revealing the truth of Jesus

by John M. Criswell

and the use of drugs is alarming. . . . Pray for national repentance and return to God."

Indeed prayer is where we begin. Prayer brought about Claire's conversion. She is fairly typical of Britons today. Outwardly she has been "Christian" all her life, having grown up in a "Christian" nation, having been basically a moral person, and even having gone to church a few times. But it was not until she saw the truth of Jesus that he became Lord in her life. Many people in the world, although they know of Jesus, need to know the truth of Jesus and

meet him face to face. Great Britain needs churches that actively display the beauty and vibrancy of our faith in committed discipleship and community.

Our goal in London is to plant the first Brethren in Christ congregation that will serve as the mother church for the brotherhood in the United Kingdom. It is logical that we start in London, not only because it is the capital, but also because about one fifth of the nation's population (about 12,000,000) live in the south-east portion of the country. The United Kingdom has a population of

about 56,000,000 in an area about the size of Oregon. This great density of population brings many problems of working and living in a major city: overcrowding, housing shortages, heavy traffic, pollution, noise, crime, labor and racial strife, poverty, and an overabundance of broken families. These all make our goal a challenge, but this is where the needs are.

Our team, presently Curt and Marti Byers and Margie and I, have already started working towards this goal. Curt and Marti have been assigned the task of "spying out the land." They are doing the necessary research to determine the area of London which is best to begin our church.

Their spying takes quite a bit of effort. Curt has had numerous interviews with other church planters, pastors, and church leaders in the area to gain firsthand information from their experiences of building churches in London. He has also traveled to many parts of the city to get the feel of different areas, as well as to obtain the latest census figures from local governments. He has brought all this information together into a report we submitted in May to the Board for World Missions for their decision on a site for church planting.

Margie and I have participated

Emmanuel Family Centre, one of the congregations in the Ichthus Christian Fellowship.



some in this research with Curt and Marti, but our primary area of responsibility is to work with the Ichthus Christian Fellowship for a year. While Curt is gleaning the hard data, we are working with a British church to gain firsthand experience in their methods of church planting. This year's experience is a good opportunity to learn about the British culture, become familiar with the British churches, and find frequent opportunities for ministry.

Ichthus is a church that has been in existence since 1974, when it began as a house group. It took them eight years to grow to 300 people, but in the past four years they have grown to about 1,200 people in 56 house groups and 16 area congregations all over southeast London. These last four years have developed Ichthus' knack and reputation for church planting.

Ichthus runs an 11-month training program, designed to create church leaders. Although it is partly academic in that we have regular lectures, it is also intensely practical, as we engage in planting churches for Ichthus. There are 29 of us from all over the world in the program. Our work involves a lot of evangelism in many different forms: door to door, street witnessing, open air preaching and drama, evangelistic events, and personal witnessing. Pastoral care and follow-up are also a good portion of our work.

Each networker is assigned to work with a particular congregation. We are working with the Emmanuel Family Centre in Lower Sydenham, a congregation of about 70 people. Curt and Marti participate part-time in the Cornerstone congregation in Lewisham. This is the congregation Jay and Judy Smith helped begin when they were here three years ago.

In addition to our regular tasks, we also participate in various missions: a city-wide follow-up to Mission England in Rugby, a university mission at Thames Polytechnic, and



John and Margie Criswell at Emmanuel House.

an overseas mission in Berlin. Throughout the year various events such as Ichthus' own mission, the National Evangelist's Conference, and attending lectures given by people like Ray Bakke, Josh McDowell, and Winkie Pratney are scheduled. All in all they keep us quite busy.

Ichthus is an unusual church, not just because of its rapid growth, but also because of its unique combination of theology and structure. The church represents a combination of Wesleyan, Anabaptist, and charismatic theologies, which one does not often see. It is structured on three different levels. First is the house group, where 15 or so people gather regularly in homes to worship, fellowship, and study the Bible. This is the essence of the church, where discipleship is most intense. The second level is the congregation, where three or four area house groups meet regularly together for worship on Sundays. Here the needs of the community are addressed. The third level is the Sunday evening meetings at Sedgehill School, where all the congregations come together for worship and celebration (about 600-700 people). Here the whole fellowship is exhorted to further growth, both personally and evangelistically.

This combination of structure and theology makes Ichthus very good at revealing and demonstrating the truth of Jesus in a dynamic, relevant way to people who have not heard or seen. We believe that the Brethren in Christ also have a unique message to share with London. The key is to take the truth of Jesus and present it

in a relevant way that will naturally reveal the enticing qualities of the gospel. Britain is tired of seeing the church as a huge, old cathedral, with a dozen or so faithful members struggling to keep things going. Britons are looking for meaning and purpose in life, and we know the gospel can provide it. What an opportunity we have to share it!

We moved in August to north London to begin that phase of the work. Soon, the Lord willing, others will join our team as well. More than likely, the existing Brethren in Christ International Fellowship, under the direction of Elias and Fadza Moyo, will join the work. So things are already gearing up. At the time of this writing the best options for our location are the Brent, Camdentown, Chelsea, and London Bridge areas.

When the Board makes the decision, we will begin making our contacts. By the grace of God we are going to build his church here. He has already blessed us with the opportunities to see people saved, filled with the Spirit, healed, and grow in discipleship. We have no reason to expect anything less in the years to come.

Choice of site—London

Fannie Longenecker

Brent, in western London, though still fairly close to the center, has been approved as the area in which to plant a Brethren in Christ Church. It is a middle-class community with family orientation, but it is underevangelized. The larger Brent community includes Caribbean and African blacks, Asians from India and Pakistan, and persons experiencing deprivation. When housing is found suited to their respective gifts for ministry, the Curtis Byers and Elias Moyo families will move into the area. One housing unit is to be within practical communication distance of a black or other ethnic residential community. May the Spirit continue to direct every step.

God at work in our world

A snowball avalanche?

Bob Geiger, Colombia

So much is happening! It's rather like a snowball starting an avalanche. God seemed to give us personal direction through our attendance at the interdenominational pastors' and missionaries' conference. We moved our Sunday women's Bible study to Thursday and invited people to come sing and pray with us. The Bible study has increased from one or two to seven or nine. They are inviting others. One, a Christian without much depth, realized that the occult is not a Christian activity and renounced it.

A woman who talked about studying English, but never came, called us for marriage counseling. We have met with her once and the situation is rather tense, but I praise God that she called us after only talking with us one time. That is very unusual for Colombians who don't know us very well. The first time another woman came to Bible study, she shared with the group about her marriage. We are just learning to know her, but the possibilities for ministry are very real.

A single woman, 32 years old, is looking to us to disciple her. Unfortunately she got pregnant. She was finally able to tell Carol and asked her to speak to me. We went and talked to her and had a good time of repentance and asking the Lord's forgiveness. She still has some things to get straightened out, but what is amazing is that now she is inviting a lot of women to the Bible study. She took us to her sister and brother-in-law's house for lunch so we could meet them—Neida and Pavlo. I have had some real good talks with Neida and she might come shortly to the Bible study. Pavlo is "very Catholic," but he really liked us.

Here is an example of how things seem to be working. We went to the mall to buy some things and decided to take the bus home. Since we live near the end of the run, the bus usually is not very full. However, this time people kept getting on behind us. Carol took a seat and the woman beside her asked to hold Rebecca so that Carol could hold Nathan. I was standing with David. I started talking to the lady through

Becka. We asked how she was and then where she lived. She lived in our neighborhood, so I gave her one of my cards and invited her to visit us. She read the top of the card about a Christian community and asked if I knew a missionary in the city. He is a close friend of mine. She used to go to his church very irregularly and asked where we go. When we told her what we are doing, she was excited and said she would come the next Sunday.

This typifies the spirit of what is happening. It is not an explosion of people coming to the Lord, yet it is like some deep rumbling, signs of God's moving in people's hearts. I feel like we are on the verge of God's doing something really big.

Sunday school class— Choma Secondary

Cindy Robinson, Zambia

I have thoroughly enjoyed learning to know my students and spending time with them. Many of them enjoy it when their teachers have time for them. One of the classes which I have enjoyed most has been my Sunday school class of 10th graders. We have been studying men and women of the Bible, starting with the Old Testament, and seeing how God uses ordinary people to accomplish his work. We saw how they were human, subject to temptation, and did fall into sin, just as we can if we rely on our own efforts. I have been impressed with the interest shown in class and with some of the students' thought-provoking questions. For instance, "If Noah spent 120 years building the ark while he was preaching to the people, did he reach all the people in the world? Or did he not tell some of the people, giving them no chance to save themselves?" Also, "Isn't it wrong to marry our relatives? Abraham did it." We touched on such issues as a universal flood vs. a local flood, evolution, and polygamy. 10th graders!

On Easter Sunday I planned a special lesson. I borrowed a tape with songs that focus around the events before, during, and after the crucifixion of Christ. I chose four songs. After we looked at

different portions of Scripture, we listened to the music with words provided so the students could follow along. After class, three of the girls remained behind to pray for a strengthening of their faith. Praise the Lord! Teenagers in Zambia are virtually the same as teens in the States. They have peer pressures, struggles, and temptations as in the States. Finding a teenager who is a 'spiritual giant' is rare. We expect to find spiritually strong teens and are disappointed when they fall because we lose sight of their struggles. We should focus on the fact that they are striving to deepen their faith and are seeking God's help to grow and become stronger Christians. Instead of condemning them, we must bear with the weak and help them to become strong. I praise God for my Sunday school class and their openness and receptivity. God is working through me to strengthen them in their faith.

Church planting in San Juan

*Fannie Longenecker, from a report by
Tim Giles, Venezuela*

After about a month's delay in securing a room in which to meet, the six-month evangelism for church planting project was begun. Working together, Tim Giles and Omar Diaz showed an anti-abortion film and followed it with a short evangelistic message by Omar. An average of 30 people attended the preaching campaign in June. Evangelism Explosion (EE) teams followed up results and sought to direct them into Tim's first Discovery Group. Tim conducted the first Brethren in Christ worship service in San Juan on June 22, 1986, with 23 people attending. Tim and Omar plan special programs with an evangelistic emphasis for each month through October. These include vacation Bible school, films, and another preaching campaign. Again, the trained EE teams will try to channel the results into a second Discovery Group. Hopefully the first Discovery Group will have progressed into the first Discipleship Group.

Tim Giles writes: "I have been pleased with how Omar and I have been work-

ing together. We are very different people, but I think we respect each other and complement each other in our differences. We have had to work together in planning and he has been cooperative in putting both of our ideas together. His ideas, I have found, have been very valuable as they have been from a Venezuelan point of view. I have been careful to try to preserve our Brethren in Christ flavor which I think is standing us in very good stead in Montalban. . . .

"I came away from a meeting of the coalition with a very positive feeling. The men were both very supportive and very thorough in their concern and care of their project. I felt very privileged to have such a high caliber group behind

me in my work in San Juan. They were there with their wisdom and their resources." Thank God for such support!

Serving . . . but being served

Curtis Book—Zimbabwe

Leslie and I have been visiting villages. The family went to the home of Bruce Khumalo's parents. I had been invited to speak at a youth camp of five churches in their area. Our stay of two nights was wonderful. I continue to be amazed at the hospitality, the simplicity, the people-orientation rather than time-orientation, and the beauty of the cul-

ture. I have never felt so royally treated in any place as I have in an African village. Part of that is the very great appreciation that is extended to visitors to the home. Everything centers around you, whether you are there for three hours or two days. This includes the preparation of food, the sitting down to visit, the evening prayers where they call the whole village and sometimes the people of the surrounding villages. Even the work—usually they don't want guests to work. There is something in the life and work of the village that seems parallel to the life of a pioneer settler of nineteenth century in North America.

Shortly before we went, I found out that the venue of the youth meetings was not at Sitezi, but at Mayezani, 10 miles further. That meant that I went to the youth meeting and Leslie and the children stayed at Khumalo's village. The youth program started Saturday with sports at 4:00 p.m. and the evening program in the church at dusk. This program continued until 5:00 a.m. Sunday. It consisted of a great deal of singing as a whole group and many, many smaller groups. There were two or three dramas, speeches, testimonies, preaching, and election of youth officers for an overall youth committee for these five churches. The strength of the youth in that area is due in part to the work of our recent graduates of Ekuphileni Bible Institute who are active there.

My accommodations Saturday night.

I had cycled about 10 miles from where the family was staying and thought I might return there for the night if it was not too late, so I hadn't anything with me except the clothes on my back, my Bible, and sermon notes. I was shown to the room that had been prepared for me during the dinner hour, which was 9:00 p.m. A staff office at Mayezani School had been converted into a bedroom, reminding me of the little room prepared for the prophet Elisha. There was a single bed—sheets smoothed and blankets nicely fitted. Beside the bed was a bench on which a candle burned. There was also a towel, facecloth and mirror, a basin of water and a new bar of soap. Being in the bush, this did surprise me. I went to sleep while the youth continued singing in the church not 20 yards from me.

I was surprised by the reports of some of the youth activities. At Sitezi Church, the youth sent out two gospel teams through whom they were doing evangelism and drama. I was very happy about the strength of the youth of the area.

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people
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1946.**

A significant minority

by Martha Lockwood

Thirty-four percent . . . a rather "significant" minority! Although it is not a majority, it is a significant amount. What is thirty-four percent? Well, it is the percentage of single adults attending Riverside Chapel, a Brethren in Christ congregation, in Fort Erie, Ontario. While this is only one congregation, it may be fairly representative of other Brethren in Christ churches across the United States and Canada.

Regardless of the exact size of the group, there are a significant number of singles in our congregations to whom we need to minister. Many of these singles have unique struggles and concerns which the church has had difficulty addressing.

There is no typical mold that every single person fits into—that is to say, singles are a very diverse group. For instance, they may be in college or university. Some may be established in a career. Others may be parenting alone or they may be wishing for children they never had. They may be searching for a companion or relishing their independence and freedom. The description could go on and on. One thing is certain. Singles are not a homogeneous group. They are as diverse as the body of Christ.

They are also diverse in their needs, struggles and concerns. Some are overwhelmed with loneliness. Others search for meaningful and intimate relationships. Some struggle with self-esteem, forgiveness, guilt and acceptance. Others feel the heavy burden of financial responsibility. And still others seek direction for the years ahead.

Whatever their profile, need or struggle, the church has an obligation and privilege to minister to this group. Unfortunately, the church has done a rather poor job at ministry to the needs of this group. So often, these individuals are viewed more in terms of their contribu-



tion to the body rather than the body's contribution to them. What can be done about this?

A valuable and exciting event is happening over the next 6 months. Have you heard about "Celebration, Motivation, Integration—Stages of Singleness"? The Board for Congregational Life is sponsoring three conventions for single persons of all ages and stages in life. The same basic program and personnel will be followed at all three conventions. Participants may select the location and date of their choice (or even attend all three if they desire!)

Here are the specifics: November 28-30, 1986 Mt. Carmel Retreat Centre, Niagara Falls, Ontario Canada; January 2-4, 1987 Tamiment Resort, Tamiment, PA; and March 20-22, 1987 Arrowhead Springs Campus Crusade International Headquarters, Arrowhead Springs, CA.

The format for the convention will include large group sessions with resource personnel Dr. Dorothy Gish, Dr. Walter Winger and Mr. Frank Fimiano. Each speaker brings their own expertise to this area and will offer a wealth of resources. Miss Monique Tute, a gifted musician will lead the music and provide

ministry of music at all three conventions. There will be plenty of time for small group interaction, sharing, fellowship, relaxation and refreshment.

Workshops will offer individuals the opportunity of zeroing in on the issues that concern them the most. Some of the topics will include: Sexuality: Permissiveness . . . Purity; Single Parenting for the Next Decade; Good Money Management; The Healthy Single Lifestyle; Living Alone—Pros and Cons; Roles of Singles In the Church; Single Again—Widowed; Single Again—Divorced and Maintaining a Positive Self Image.

A planning committee, comprised of Kaye Byer, Mary Jane Davis, Frank Fimiano, Sandi (Fretz) Hannigan, Phil Frey, Joe Hyatt, Martha Lady, Ken Letner and Martha Lockwood is excited about the potential of this event. Please join with them in pray and expectation for God's ministry to singles at "Celebration, Motivation, Integration." It will be a great time!

More information may be obtained by contacting one of the individuals listed above who live in your area. You may also complete this form to receive a registration form and brochure.

Yes, I wish to attend *Celebration, Motivation, Integration* at the following location:

- ☐ Mt. Carmel Retreat Centre, Niagara Falls, Ontario
- ☐ Tamiment Resort, Tamiment, Pa.
- ☐ Arrowhead Springs, Calif.

Please send me more information, including a registration form.

Name _____

Address _____

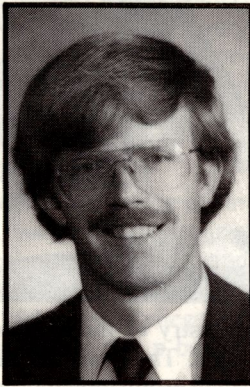
City _____ State/Prov _____ Code _____

Number of forms requested: _____

Mail to: Ken Letner, Box 163, Mount Joy, Pa., or
Sandi Hannigan, 305-232 King St. N., Waterloo, ONT N2J 2Y7

Martha Lockwood chairs the Youth Interaction Committee of the Canadian Board for Congregational Life. A student at Emmanuel Bible College in Kitchener, she lives in Fort Erie and attends Riverside Chapel.

Harry Bergey ordained



The Brethren in Christ Church in Montoursville, Pa., was the scene for the ordination service of Harry W. Bergey on April 6, 1986. The ordination sermon was preached by Rev. Charles Westgate, of the neighboring Community Baptist Church in Montoursville. Rev. Westgate has been a great help to Harry in his early years of ministry. Harry's father, Rev. Walton H. Bergey, of Souderton, Pa., and Rev. Omer E. King, Harry's home church pastor from the Silverdale, Pa., congregation, also took part in the ceremony.

Harry and his wife, Mary Beth, are both 1976 graduates of Messiah College. He spent five years in the carpentry business of his father before being called to the pastorate at Montoursville. They have been at the Montoursville church for four and one half years. They have two children, Daniel and Timothy.

Brethren in Christ teams make great showing at World Bible Quiz Tournament

Five Brethren in Christ teams made their presence felt at the 1986 World Bible Quiz Tournament held at Greenville College, Greenville, Ill. on July 24-26. At the end of the preliminary round robin quizzing, all five teams were among the top ten teams, with Grantham leading the pack and Hanover tied for tenth place. That represented quite an accomplishment, for after a slow start and at the end of the fourth round (a total of eleven rounds in round robins) we had teams in second, twelfth, thirteenth, fourteenth, and a tie for last place!

Following the completion of the round robins, the teams were rebracketed and the final countdown began. Our team from Grantham entered the finals with Olivet Nazarene and Omega Free Methodist. After two quizzes, Grantham gained second place behind Olivet Nazarene. The Grantham team consisted of Lisa Brubaker, Corrie Hess, Vicki Miller, Sherri Peachey, Tammy St. Onge and Doug Stevick. The team was coached by Mindy Brubaker.

Pequea was the eight-place finisher with Doug Shirk as coach and quizzers Brenda Hess, Peter Hess, Scott Hess and Cindy Shirk.

The Atlantic team, finishing ninth, was made up of quizzers from five dif-

ferent Brethren in Christ churches: Mona Becker (Refton), Anthony Book (Mt. Pleasant), Gregg Bowman (Speedwell Heights), Karen Pertusio (Palmyra) and Anthony Robles (Fellowship Chapel). Charlie Crider, Atlantic Conference quizmaster, coached the team.

Lancaster finished tenth and was coached by Mark Simmons with quizzers Rick Morris, Eric Steffy, Matt Warfel and Roger Wolgemuth.

The Hanover team, after being higher throughout the day, was caught in an unfortunate five-way tie for tenth place in the round robin. In a tie-breaking playoff, they lost by a few points and ended in eighteenth place. They were coached by Rick Keller with quizzers Elaine Baugher, Ray Keller, Judy Malehorn, John Kanwischer, and Melissa Webb.

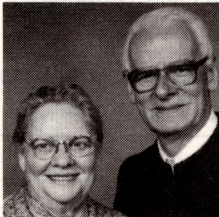
The awards banquet produced some pleasant surprises. Doug Stevick won the coveted Bert Larrimore Outstanding Quizzer award as well as the Tournament Top Scorer trophy. Anthony Book was the fifth high scorer. Elaine Baugher was the ninth top quizzer and Cindy Shirk was the tenth high quizzer.

All in all, everyone had a great time and, needless to say, many of the quizzers are looking forward to next year's tournament.—Charlie Crider

Marsh Creek, Pa., congregation honors Pastor Buckwalter's retirement

With the exception of an air of excitement, all seemed nearly normal at the start of our Sunday school on June 1. But soon our pastor and wife, Lloyd and Cora Buckwalter, were called up front for a special announcement. They were told that we as a congregation greatly appreciated their 45½ years of faithful service, and that we had invited some special guests to help them celebrate. The ushers then opened the rear sanctuary doors and in came about 40 guests—family, friends, relatives, and five present or former bishops.

The highlight of the day came when Elwood, their oldest son, came forward to bring recorded greetings from Africa, where their daughter and her husband, Karen and Donald Vundla, live. Just as he handed the cassette player and tape to the pastor, Karen came walking up the aisle. She had flown home from



Africa to share in her parents' special day. It was quite an emotional moment.

During the morning service, Jacob Bowers, Luke Keefer Sr., Charlie Byers, and Henry Ginder reminisced about their friendship with the Buckwalters. Edith Nyman, who attends the Marsh Creek church, read a poem she wrote about the Buckwalters' years of service. Bishop H. Frank Kipe then concluded the morning with a challenging message.

After a soup and salad bar luncheon, the congregation gathered for an afternoon service. Bishop Kipe, John Rosenberry, Curtis Bryant, and the Buckwalter children—Elwood, Mervin, Leon, and Karen—shared along with members of the local congregation in the service, which was concluded by Jacob Bowers relating the story of how the Buckwalters came to Marsh Creek.

In addition to presenting the Buckwalters with a travel money tree, a special parsonage building fund offering was lifted in appreciation of their years of service, totalling approximately \$1,500.—Deborah Mansell.

Final Standings

1. Olivet Nazarene
2. Grantham BIC
3. Omega West Free Methodist
4. Southwest PA Youth for Christ
5. Omega East Free Methodist
6. Huron Valley Michigan YFC
7. West Texas Nazarene
8. Pequea BIC
9. Atlantic BIC
10. Lancaster BIC
11. Minnesota Youth for Christ
12. Abington PA Presbyterian
13. Omega Central Free Methodist
14. Nappanee IN Missionary
15. Detroit Michigan Youth for Christ
16. Mt. Vernon Ohio Nazarene
17. North Arkansas Nazarene
18. Hanover BIC
19. Kilgore Texas Nazarene
20. ECY of Ohio
21. Lite Star Kansas Independent

Congregational News Notes

Allegheny Conference

Rev. and Mrs. Charles Lehman, administrators of the Paxton Street Home in Harrisburg, Pa., shared about the ministry of the home on July 13 with the **Air Hill** congregation, Chambersburg, Pa. • Thirteen new members were received in June into the **Antrim** congregation, Greencastle, Pa., bringing total membership to 326. • Pastor John L. Rosenberry delivered his farewell sermon on July 13 to the **Big Valley** congregation, Belleville, Pa. One hundred five persons participated in a dinner following the service.

Eleven persons were received into membership June 22 at the **Carlisle**, Pa., church. Eighteen youth and adults planned to be in Kentucky August 17-22 to help in home fix-up for the disadvantaged through SWAP, an MCC sponsored program. • Five members were received into the fellowship of the **Cedar Grove** congregation, Mifflintown, Pa., during an evening communion and footwashing service on June 22. Member Julie Symmerman was recently commissioned to a one-year voluntary service term at Upland Manor, Calif.

Dedication was set for September 7 for 30 "shepherds" who will each care for clusters of approximately 5 families of the **Chambersburg**, Pa., congregation. • On June 22, three teens from the **Clarence Center** congregation, N.Y., were commissioned for service in Mexico through Teen Mission. • On June 29, Ben and Vera Koontz of the **Clear Creek** congregation, Everett, Pa., renewed their vows and celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary at the church.

The morning message on July 6 for the **Dillsburg**, Pa., congregation was given by Messiah College student David Hamulumba of Zambia. Vacation Bible School was held July 14-18. • A Children's Crusade was sponsored June 16-20 by the **Fairview Avenue** congregation, Waynesboro, Pa., with an enrollment of 108, plus nursery and staff. Six children made decisions for the Lord. Offerings of \$301 went to Jay and Judy Smith, missionaries to Senegal. • The Gary Potteigers, former voluntary service workers in Zambia, were the guests of the **Five Forks** congregation, Waynesboro, Pa., on July 20.

David Zercher, 1983 graduate of Messiah College and Young Alumnus Representative on the Messiah College Board of Trustees, assumed the duties August 11 of Minister of Pastoral Care of the **Graham**, Pa., congregation. On June 29, the church held an appreciation day for David and Libby Hall who have accepted a pastorate in Kansas. • The **Hanover**, Pa., congregation planned their quarterly talent night for July 20, sponsored by the Christ's Crusaders.

A July 27 sacred concert by Melody Royer Brumbaugh was planned at the **Martinsburg**, Pa., church. • The Ben Stoner family from Navajo Mission spoke to the **Morning Hour Chapel** congregation, East Berlin, Pa., on June 29. On July 27, the youth led in the Sunday school and worship service. • The **Mt. Rock** congregation, Shippenburg, Pa., recently helped sponsor the Dentler Village Hymn Sing and Ice Cream Social. An offering was received for the Dentler Village Playground Association.

Luke Keefer, Jr., gave leadership to a Summer Bible Conference at the **New Guilford** church, Chambersburg, Pa., July 19-20. The theme was

"Studies in Discipleship." • The **Van Lear** congregation, Williamsport, Md., enjoyed an ice cream social and hymn sing on July 13. • On June 15, the children of the **West Shore** congregation, Enola, Pa., released 100 helium balloons advertising vacation Bible school. A unique feature of the school was the weighing of the offering, received for malnourished children in Zambia. The money totalled \$131.42 (or 42½ pounds), which included 6,733 pennies.

An August 13 installation and dedication service was planned for the new **West Side** church, four miles west of Chambersburg, Pa. The service included installation of Pastor W. Edward Rickman and his family and an offering for the church's land purchase fund. An open house followed at the Rickman home adjacent to the proposed site.

Atlantic Conference

The drama team of the **Cross Roads** congregation, Mt. Joy, Pa., presented the Festival in Song at the Kenbrook lakeside on July 13. The congregation has called Wayne and Ruth Kenney to be pastoral couple starting August 17. • The **Elizabethtown**, Pa., congregation planned an all-church pig roast picnic for July 27. Money was presented recently from the congregation to Stephen and Lauren Ginder, newly-assigned missionaries to Sikalongo Bible Institute, for the purchase of two bicycles.

The **Lancaster**, Pa., church planned to host a Christian Light Bookstore music seminar for choir directors on August 26. • The **Manheim**, Pa., congregation welcomed the Continental Singers and Orchestra on July 21. • On the evening of July 20, Don and Cathy Ertley shared with the **Manor** congregation, Mountville, Pa., their experiences in preparing for mission work in Israel and Africa. • Speaking in the July 20 evening service of the **Mastersonville** congregation, Manheim, Pa., was retired Brethren in Christ representative for Menonite Disaster Service, Raymond Hess.

Ethel and Rev. George Bundy, Superintendent of the Navajo Mission, N.M., spoke in the morning service recently at the **Mt. Pleasant** church, Mt. Joy, Pa. • Rev. S. Lane Hostetter, general manager of the Christian Light Bookstores, spoke to the **Palmyra**, Pa., congregation on the morning of July 13. The Marlin Zooks were installed August 17 as pastoral family, replacing the Ethan Gramms, now living in Orlando, Fla. • An offering of \$283 was collected at the **Pequea** (Lancaster, Pa.) congregation's vacation Bible school. The money went for a tape recorder and gospel cassettes for church planters in Orissa, India.

Eight persons were received into membership in the **Refton**, Pa., congregation on June 29. A farewell and commissioning service was held August 24 for Doug and Karen Slaymaker, headed for Japan for three years with Brethren in Christ Missions. • Four persons were received into membership recently at the **Silverdale**, Pa., church. A VBS Staff Appreciation Picnic was held June 29. • The **Skyline View** congregation, Harrisburg, Pa., had vacation Bible school July 14-18.

The **Souderton**, Pa., congregation employed Lester Zook part-time during the summer for varied pastoral responsibilities. On July 20, the Missions Team sponsored a service featuring Bishop

Stephen Ndlovu of Zimbabwe preaching, and Dr. Bob and Marilyn Smith sharing recent Africa experiences. • The **Speedwell Heights** congregation, Lititz, Pa., held a service of dedication on June 29 for their newly remodeled basement. Gregg Bowman represented the congregation on the Brethren in Christ all-star team at the World Bible Quiz Finals at Greenville College, Ill.

Canadian Conference

The **Bridlewood** congregation, Agincourt, Ont., planned to participate in a service August 3 with other Brethren in Christ and Mennonites in the Toronto region as part of the Harbourfront Week-end. • Five persons were baptized June 22 into the fellowship of the **Cheapside** congregation, Nanticoke, Ont. Brian Lofthouse from Houghton shared the morning message on June 29, and Fannie Longenecker on July 13.

Arthur Climenhaga preached on July 6 to the **Cross Roads Memorial** congregation, Guelph, Ont. • A baptismal service for 4 persons was held recently at the **Falls View** church, Niagara Falls, Ont. The Sunday school picnic was at Niagara Christian College on June 15. • The **Heise Hill** congregation, Gormley, Ont., recently enjoyed a concert by Jim Alexander of Spirit Brass and his wife Marie. Bishop Frank Kipe spoke in the morning service, July 6.

Karen Welch of the **Houghton** congregation, Langton, Ont., spent two weeks in Mexico with Compassion Canada, July 12-26, rebuilding in the earthquake area, distributing Bibles, and befriending needy families. Anna Engle, 90-year-old missionary and teacher, planned to share with the congregation, July 13-15. • Guest speaker for the **Port Colborne**, Ont., congregation on July 6 was Atlee Hersherberger of McMinnville, Tenn. Felix Sun, student at Asbury Seminary, recently gave personal testimony followed by a prayer time for young people in training for church ministries.

During July at the **Ridgemount** church, Hamilton, Ont., three people were baptized and five babies were dedicated. The church was filled to capacity on July 6 with many General Conference delegates and guests. July 13 was the evening farewell gathering for the Vern Bosserman family. • The **Rosebank** congregation, Petersburg, Ont., recently held a missionary conference with Dr. Donald Zook as speaker, and brother and sister, John and Monique Tute, musicians. The Sunday school picnic was July 20.

A "Helping Hands" ministry has been initiated by the Ladies Auxiliary of the **Sherkston**, Ont., congregation to help families who have had a wife or husband hospitalized for an extended time. Angela Ruegg served for a month this summer in Dominica, West Indies, with a Missions Outreach Incorporated team. • The **Sonshine Makers** of the **Wainfleet**, Ont., congregation recently presented the musical "Amazing Grace." Bishop Ndlovu shared in the morning worship on June 29.

Central Conference

The Marlin Zooks, former missionaries to Japan, visited the **Amherst** congregation, Massillon, Ohio, on July 23. • The youth of the **Beulah Chapel** congregation, Springfield, Ohio, planned a June 29 service of music and testimonies, with a salad bar following. An evening service on July 28 was presented by the summer music ministry of Messiah College. • Dave and Florence Carlson, recently returned from Monte Carlo and their service with Trans World Radio, shared the mes-

sage on July 13 with the **Christian Union** congregation, Garrett, Ind. The Christian Union Bible school was August 4-8.

The **Fairview** congregation, Englewood, Ohio, planned an August 15-17 family camping outing. Fifty-nine children attended the Fairview Bible school, 35 from other than church families. The closing program was June 22. • Ground breaking for the expansion of the **Nappanee**, Ind., Christian education facility was August 10. Completion is expected in November. • The youth of the **Pleasant Hill**, Ohio, congregation recently enjoyed a canoeing trip down the Miami River. Meryl Thuma, principal at the International School in San Pedro Sula, Honduras, spoke in the July 6 morning service. The Junior Sunday school department travelled August 6 to the Children's Museum, Indianapolis.

The **Sippo Valley** congregation, Massillon, Ohio, began in August a two-year growth program with Central Conference Church Developer Ken Gibson. The film "The Cross and the Switchblade" was shown July 27 for the youth and their friends. • Phyllis Engle, member of the **Western Hills** congregation, Cincinnati, Ohio, and missionary to Zambia, shared personal experiences with the congregation on July 30.

Midwest Conference

The **Abilene**, Ks., congregation held a baptismal service on June 15, and a morning anointing for healing service on June 29. The Abilene church began publishing a newsletter, "Sharing the Vision," in August. • The **Bethany** congregation, Thomas, Okla., enjoyed four Sunday evening films through the summer: "Diagnosis," "Nikolai," "So Many Voices," and "The Visitor." • The Bridge of Life Singers presented a concert during the worship hour on July 6 for the **Mountain View** congregation, Colorado Springs, Colo. The congregation planned an all-church picnic on August 9 at the Black Forest Regional Park.

Ed Strayer of the **Oklahoma City**, Okla., church reports making helpful discoveries in his research on the feasibility of a second congregation in the Oklahoma City area. • The **Rosebank** congregation, Hope, Ks., shared the sponsorship of the Dobson film series "Turn Your Heart Toward Home" on six consecutive Sundays beginning July 20. Rosebank also held a prophetic and evangelism conference with Charles L. Park of Tulsa, Okla., August 6-8. Rev. Park has made 23 trips to the Middle East. • Bishop Glenn Ginder spoke to the **Zion** congregation, Abilene, Ks., on July 20. The service was followed by a sandwich and salad lunch.

Pacific Conference

Following the Sunday school hour on July 20 at the **Pacific Highway Community Church** (formerly Labish), Salem, Ore., the congregation travelled to the home of a local member. There, the morning worship included music, message, and a General Conference report by Pastor Hostetler. The annual picnic was then enjoyed by all. • Members of the **Riverside**, Calif., congregation took a day's trip to Mexico sponsored by Spectrum Ministries. A garage sale was planned for August 2, 3.

Rick Carter assumed the senior pastorate of the **Open Bible Community** congregation, Sunnymead, Calif., on June 15, replacing Kevin Longenecker. • Charles S. Lady of Buffalo, N.Y., was contracted to serve in July and August as Assistant Minister of Music for the **Upland**, Calif., con-

gregation. The film "Fractured Families" was enjoyed on the evening of July 6. Enrollment at the church's day camp approached 300 in mid-summer. The camp staff reports many decisions for Christ. Eight children of the primary Sunday school department learned all 22 verses in a five-month Bible memory program.

For the Record

Births

Armstrong: Bryan Lee, June 20; Robert and Lisa (Spence) Armstrong, Manor congregation, Pa.

Bergey: Timothy Walton, May 13; Harry and Mary Beth (Starner) Bergey, Montoursville congregation, Pa.

Brubaker: Allen James, July 6; John and Kathy Brubaker, West Shore congregation, Pa.

Chesnut: Andrew Robert, June 28; Bob and Vickie Chesnut, Hollowell congregation, Pa.

DuBose: Ivana Joy, July 16; Morris and Dawn (Smith) Dubose, Valley Chapel congregation, Ohio.

Ebersole: Bryan Matthew, June 16; Merle, Jr., and Linda Ebersole, Martinsburg, Pa.

Ensminger: Kristen Diane, June 24; Jesse and Ellen (Esh) Ensminger, Five Forks congregation, Pa.

Feaster: Brittany Michelle, July 1; Mark and Jennie (Bowman) Feaster, Clear Creek congregation, Pa.

Fies: Jordan, May 14; Victor and Kathy (Gish) Fies, Shenks congregation, Pa.

Funk: Taylor Lee, July 6; Paul and Betsy (Horst) Funk, Chambersburg congregation, Pa.

Hess: Elizabeth Faye, June 27; Raymond and Faye Hess, Pequea congregation, Pa.

Hollenbach: David Charles, June 24; Jeff and Libby Hollenbach, Souderton congregation, Pa.

Lapp: Janelle Marie, June 25; Randy and Diane Lapp, Pequea congregation, Pa.

LaSala: Meredith Blake, July 10; Bruce and Lorie LaSala, Manor congregation, Pa.

Mellot: Joy Lee, July 9; Bill and Joyce (Starr) Mellott, New Guilford congregation, Pa.

Redfearn: Jonathan Kim, April 5, 1985; adopted on March 13, 1986 by Mark and Karen (Sider) Redfearn, Pequea congregation, Pa.

Shank: Cody Allen, May 24; Roy and Tina (Brechtbill) Shank, Antrim congregation, Pa.

Sider: Matthew Glenn John, June 19; Glenn and Margaret Sider, Rosebank congregation, Ont.

Steinbacher: Tasha Lynn, June 29; Shelly Steinbacher, Montoursville congregation, Pa.

Weisel: Bethany Joy, June 2; David and Cynthia Weisel, Morrison congregation, Ill.

Weddings

Church-Rupright: Judith, daughter of Mrs. Esther Rupright and the late Murl N. Rupright, Midland, Mich., and Jack, son of Mr. and Mrs.

Larry Church, Regina, Sask., June 21 in the First United Methodist Church, Midland.

Clinch-Engle: Carolyn Joyce, daughter of Martha E. Hoover, Messiah Village, Mechanicsburg, Pa., and the late Irvin R. Hoover, and Nelson John, son of Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Clinch, Vernon Center, N.Y., May 10 at the Messiah Village Chapel.

Forrest-Shirton: Michelle Shirton and Michael Forrest, both of the Springvale congregation, Ont., May 31, with Rev. Charlie Byer officiating.

Forrey-Heimbach: Teresa, daughter of Mr. Charles Heimbach and Mrs. John Kahley, and Darwin, son of Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Forrey, June 28 at the Cedar Grove Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. M. Eugene Heidler officiating.

Glenn-May: Cheryl Lynn, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Donald May, Prescott, Ariz., and Geoffrey Wayne, son of Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Glenn, Harrisburg, Pa., June 14 at the Fishing Creek Salem United Methodist Church with Rev. Michael Minnix officiating.

Houck-Geiter: Donna Rae, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Donald R. Geiter, Lancaster, Pa., and David Galen, son of Mr. and Mrs. Lester R. Houck, Washington Boro, Pa., June 28 at the Manor Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. John Hawbaker officiating.

Hughes-Henry: Crystal Henry and Ken Hughes, both of the Springvale congregation, Ont., May 10, with Rev. Charlie Byer officiating.

Ladwig-Conner: Christa Gay, daughter of George and Joyce Conner, Morrison, Ill., and David, son of Judith Ladwig of Plymouth, Wisc., June 7 with Rev. Clyde Richardson and Rev. Darrell Smucker officiating.

Laidlaw-Winger: V. Hazel Winger of Atwood, Ont., and Clifford J. Laidlaw of Wingham, Ont., June 14 at the Fordwich Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Jesse Bawel and Rev. George Ball officiating.

Lehman-Engelhardt: Nancy, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Engelhardt of Massachusetts, and Joseph, son of Rev. and Mrs. Charles Lehman of Harrisburg, Pa., June 28 at the Covenant Presbyterian Church, Simsbury, Conn., with Rev. Don Hass officiating.

Malinchak-Boyer: Gigi Charlene, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ted Boyer, Souderton, Pa., and Gary Andrew, son of Ellen and the late Andrew Malinchak of Old Bridge, N.J., June 28 at the Souderton Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Sam Hollingworth officiating.

McBeth-Gift: Teresa Lynn, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George E. Fuller, Sr., and Mr. Paul E. Gift, and Stanley Joseph, son of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph McBeth, Chambersburg, May 31 at the Antrim Brethren in Christ Church, Greencastle, Pa., with Rev. Wilbur W. Benner and Rev. A. G. Brubaker officiating.

Oberholtzer-Brubaker: Faithe, daughter of Rev. and Mrs. Hess Brubaker, Blairs Mills, Pa., and Kevin, son of Frances and Arthur Oberholtzer, Canton, Pa., May 31 in the Mt. Rock Brethren in Christ Church, Shippensburg, Pa., with Rev. Verle Brubaker, brother of the bride, and Rev. Hess Brubaker officiating.

Reese-Mowers: Jeffrey Reese and JoEllen Mowers, June 7 in the Mt. Rock Brethren in Christ Church, Shippensburg, Pa.

continued on next page

Rohrbaugh-Denlinger: Christine Ann, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Carl Denlinger, Mt. Joy, Pa., and Robert H., son of Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Rohrbaugh, East Petersburg, Pa., June 21 at the Lancaster Church of the Brethren with Rev. J. Calvin Wenger and Rev. Merle Brubaker officiating.

Stitely-Bumbaugh: Fawn, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Bumbaugh, Zullinger, Pa., and Jeff, son of Mr. and Mrs. Gilmore Stitely, Waynesboro, Pa., June 28 at the Hollowell Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. W. Rupert Turman officiating.

Trite-Shaffer: Melinda K., daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Darryl Shaffer, Chambersburg, Pa., and Larry, son of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Hult and Mr. Larry Trite, Sr., Hagerstown, Md., June 28 in the Antrim Brethren in Christ Church, Greencastle, Pa., with Rev. Wilbur W. Benner and Dr. Harold Barnett officiating.

Weaver-Hillegass: Aimee, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Lee Hillegass, and Sheldon, son of Mr. and Mrs. S. Gerald Weaver, June 28 in the New Enterprise Church of the Brethren with Rev. Charles O. Guyer and Rev. Earl E. Herr officiating.

Obituaries

Bowman: Mabel Bowman, 78, wife of the late Emory Bowman, died June 23, 1986. She was a member of the Clear Creek Brethren in Christ Church, Everett, Pa. Rev. Curtis Bryant and N. Blain Kauffman officiated at the funeral.

Briggs: Russell Briggs, 59, of Flemington, Pa., died July 23 in the Lock Haven Hospital. He was born March 24, 1927, the son of Roy and Bertha Briggs. Surviving are his father; his wife, Mary (Hefright); two daughters; three grandchildren; one great-grandchild; one brother and one sister. Funeral services were conducted by Pastor John L. Bundy of the Cedar Heights Brethren in Christ Church at the Yost-Gedon Funeral Home, Lock Haven. Interment was in the Hublersburg Cemetery.

Buckwalter: Amos H. Buckwalter, 72, born April 7, 1914, in Peabody, Kans., the son of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Buckwalter, died July 12, 1986. He is survived by his wife Alice; daughters Janie Casad and Esther Ginder; sons Ray and John; brothers Allen and John; eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. He pastored seven congregations in the Brethren in Christ Church and was active in missions and church planting, both on the local and General Conference level. Services were held at the Redwood Country Church in Grants Pass, Oregon, with Rev. James Ernst and Rev. R. Donald Shafer officiating. Interment was in the Granite Hill Cemetery.

Tributes

The Reverend Amos Buckwalter, our brother, friend, and colleague in ministry, served the Lord and the church well. Amos and his wife Alice were involved in pastoral ministry most of their adult life. Amos was involved in church planting in the Pacific Conference. He served in four California congregations: Moreno Community Church; Open Bible Church in Sunnymead; Lighthouse in Alta Loma; and in Pasadena; Redwood Country Church in Grants Pass, Oregon; Knifley, Kentucky; Kirkland Lake, Ontario; and most recently, serving the Grants Pass congregation again.

Amos and Alice loved people. Together their

lives touched a multitude of people. His life exemplified faithfulness to the Lord and his Church. He was unselfish in giving of himself to bless the lives of others.

Bishop J. Ralph Wenger
for the Board of Bishops

Throughout his lifetime of ministries in the Brethren in Christ Church, Amos Buckwalter was noted in a singular way for his interest, his burden, and his involvement in the mission cause of the church. He first served as chairman of the California Extension Board from 1944 to 1955. He then was a member of the General Conference mission boards in home missions, extension churches, and world missions from 1958 to 1980. During that period he was also on the Navajo Mission Board (1958-1980) and the Life Line Mission Board (1965-1976).

His earnest spirit and self-sacrificing example made him a model for the current generation. We extend our sympathy to his family and to the Redwood Country Church. But we know "his works do follow him" as a challenge to each one of you.

Thank the Lord for the hope of the resurrection. As Amos used to sing it with the Victory Quartet, "In the resurrection morning, we shall rise."

Board for World Missions

Chambers: John Arthur Chambers, 91, died January 21. He was a member of the Welland Brethren in Christ Church, and had a strong affiliation with many residents of Sunset Haven where he regularly visited as a volunteer lay minister. He was a retired inspector at Atlas Steels, where he had worked for more than 28 years. Mr. Chambers is survived by 2 sons; 4 daughters; 3 brothers; 2 sisters; 24 grandchildren; and 29 great-grandchildren. Rev. Walter Kelly officiated at the funeral. Interment was in the Hillside Cemetery, Ridgeville.

Christ: Harry E. Christ of Mt. Joy, Pa., born May 6, 1913, died June 19. He is survived by his wife Kathryn (Horst); one son; one daughter; five grandchildren; and one great-grandchild. He was a member of the Mt. Pleasant Brethren in Christ Church. Funeral services were held at the Mt. Pleasant church with Rev. Jerel Book, Rev. J. Earl Martin, Jr., and Rev. Nelson Martin officiating. Interment was in the Mt. Pleasant Cemetery.

Christopher: Christy A. Christopher died May 27 in Williamsville, N.Y. He was a member of the Clarence Center Brethren in Christ Church. Mr. Christopher is survived by his wife, Ruth; a son, Jay; two daughters, Joanne and Judy; and two grandchildren. The funeral service was held at the Clarence Center church with Rev. Ronald Loft-house officiating. Interment was in the Williamsville Cemetery.

Corbin: W. O. (Billo) Corbin, 74, of Columbia, Ky., died in Lexington, Ky., on July 11. He was preceded in death by his wife, Fannie (Powell), in 1981. Later he married Mary (Book) who survives. Also surviving are 2 sons; 8 daughters; one brother; one sister; 20 grandchildren; and 10 great-grandchildren. Mr. Corbin was a member of the Beulah Chapel Brethren in Christ Church, Garlin, Ky., where he served for many years as deacon and trustee. He had the distinction of being a member of the Kentucky Brethren in Christ Church for the longest time. He served as a building contractor and built 8-10 churches, including the Rolling Acres (McMinnville, Tenn.) and the Western Hills (Cincinnati, Ohio) churches. Funeral services were conducted at the Beulah Chapel church with Rev.

Wilbur W. Benner and Rev. Bluford Davis officiating. Interment was in the Beulah Chapel Cemetery.

Eppley: Paul E. Eppley, 34, of Fort Worth, Texas, and a former resident of Juniata County, Pa., died June 28. Born August 20, 1951, he was a son of Anna Engle Eppley and the late Charles Eppley. In addition to his mother, he is survived by two sons, Michael and Eric; his maternal grandmother, Emma Engle; three sisters, Lois Ann Hoffman, Marian Sears, and Elaine Foster; and two brothers, David and Richard. Services were held at Guss Funeral Home, Mifflintown, Pa., with Rev. M. Eugene Heidler officiating. Interment was in Mechanicsburg Cemetery.

Hann: Charles Ellis Hann, Greencastle, Pa., born June 6, 1928, in Bedford County, Pa., died June 2 at his home. He is survived by his second wife, Mary (Martin); his father, Ellis Hann; five sisters; and five stepchildren. He was a member of the Antrim Brethren in Christ Church. Funeral services were conducted from the Antrim Church with Rev. Wilbur W. Benner and Rev. Melvin Boose officiating. Interment was in the Montgomery church cemetery.

Hoover: Harold J. Hoover, born August 26, 1920, died July 4 in Abilene, Ks. Surviving are his wife, Geraldine; two daughters, Nancy Sutter and Phyllis Spotts; a son, Roger; and five grandchildren. He was a member of the Zion Brethren in Christ Church where the funeral service was held with Rev. Ron Howell officiating. Interment was in the Union Cemetery.

Kreider: Anna Grove Kreider, born October 29, 1894, died March 10 at the Lancaster Mennonite Home. Anna was a member of the Elizabethtown Brethren in Christ Church where her husband was a longtime deacon. Surviving are two sons, John and Henry; one daughter, Mrs. Roy Peterman; and eight grandchildren. Services were held at the Mennonite Home Chapel with Rev. Ralph Ginder officiating and at the Elizabethtown church with Rev. W. Dale Allison officiating. Interment was at the Mt. Tunnel Cemetery.

Morgret: George W. Morgret, Lock Haven, Pa., died June 23 in the Lock Haven Hospital. Born in Orviston on February 22, 1906, he was the son of Burton and Blanche Morgret. Mr. Morgret was a retired bricklayer. He is survived by two daughters, Mrs. Wayne (Gloria) Royer, and Mrs. Timothy (Georgie) Robb; two brothers; three sisters, five grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren. A daughter, Lois M. From, preceded him in death.

continued on next page

Position Opening in Developmental Disabilities

Mennonite Mental Health Services is seeking a qualified person to staff the Developmental Disability Services, beginning December, 1986. Qualifications include training/experience in developmental disabilities, with skill in consultation and administration. Writing, editing and speaking are included also. Travel required. Salaried position or possible senior VS appointment. Contact Gerald Shank, Personnel Services, MCC, Box M, Akron, PA 17501, Tel. (717) 859-1151.

Naylor: Catherine Eyer Naylor, born in Upland, Calif., September 20, 1911, died July 15 at the Ontario Christian Inland Home. She was married to Rev. Cletus Naylor in 1941. They served as pastoral couple at Moreno, Calif., Stowe, Pa., and at the San Francisco Mission. Catherine was a salesperson in the Christian Light Bookstores for 25 years, with 10 years as supervisor at the Redlands store. She was a member of the Moreno Valley Brethren in Christ Church. Mrs. Naylor is survived by her husband and one brother, Harvey Eyer. The funeral service was held at the Upland Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. John Snook and Rev. Alvin Burkholder officiating. Entombment was in the Bellevue Mausoleum, Ontario, Calif.

Rupright: Murl N. Rupright, born January 6, 1927, in Flint, Mich., died June 13 at Midland, Mich. He is survived by his wife, Esther; three daughters, Marian, Mrs. Jack (Judith) Church, and Mrs. Michael (Olive) Agee; three grandchildren; and one brother, Harold. One granddaughter, Crystal Agee, preceded him in death. Murl was a member of the Bethel (Merrill) Brethren in Christ Church. Interment was in the Poseyville Cemetery, Midland, Mich.

Mennonite Your Way Directory V to feature "intentional travel"

A new *Mennonite Your Way Directory V* will be published in March 1987. Leon and Nancy Stauffer, originators of the Mennonite Your Way program, say the *Directory*—covering 1987, 1988 and 1989—will focus on intentional travel.

The Stauffers, who compile the MYW directories with the help of their three children, invite you to write for an application form by November 20 if you wish to be listed as a host in *Mennonite Your Way Directory V*.

First published in 1976, the Mennonite Your Way directories list nearly 2,000 host families throughout North

America who have agreed to host travelers coming through their area. Travelers are asked to give their host several days advance notice of arrival as well as leave a small donation. Hosts are asked only to provide lodging; they, of course, may refuse visitors if there are schedule conflicts with their personal plans.

The current *Mennonite Your Way Directory IV*, which expires at the end of 1986, includes a listing of 325 contact persons in more than 50 foreign countries. While the majority of host families listed are from Church of the Brethren, Mennonite, and Brethren in Christ and related groups, an increasing number of

Money Matters

We DID it!

by Paul Hostetler

Paul Hostetler is Associate Director of Stewardship U.S.

The big announcement was about to be made. It was Thursday morning, July 10, at the opening of the final session of the 1986 General Conference in Hamilton, Ontario. The Moderator, Owen H. Alderfer, presented Harold Chubb, General Treasurer of the Brethren in Christ Church. The air was electric with suspense/anticipation/fear/hope.

As Harold made a few preliminary remarks, I murmured to myself what must have been the strong feeling of the Conference body and many others who had gathered to hear whether the goal had been achieved: "Please, Harold, let us know. This tension is more than I can bear!"

Our treasurer cleared his throat and paused, enjoying the drama of the event. And then he told us. But first, let me give you the story from the beginning.

Earlier in the Conference the Board for Evangelism and Church Planting (BCEP) gave their report. We learned that they had carried out the mandate of the church and had planted ten new churches in 1985. As part of their report, the board asked 14 couples to come forward who either have begun, or will begin in the near future, church plantings across North America. Their testimonies and prayer requests brought excitement and joy, and very naturally led to a prayer of thanksgiving and dedication.

But there was also bad news. Because Cooperative Ministries contributions fell far short of the approved budget, BCEP was forced to borrow \$150,000 to meet its commitments (mostly for pastoral salaries) last year. And it was forced to reduce the number of churches being planted this year to two.

During the coffee break on Tuesday morning, three members of the Commission on Stewardship and Finance were discussing the problem. One of them, in a Spirit-inspired moment, suggested that something should be done about the debt at this Conference. Looking ahead to the Evangelism Focus Rally on Wednesday evening, he said, "Let's find a few individuals who together will match what the people give in the offering—up to \$50,000. And let's challenge the board to pay off \$50,000 on the deficit this year. With everyone working together, we can liquidate the whole debt."

The three men agreed to try it. Other church administrators were contacted and gave their glad assent. The BCEP came on board. The matching funds persons were found. Everything was in place.

Lester Fretz, Executive Director of Stewardship in the Canadian Conference, was asked to present the challenge to the Conference body. He did a superb job, emphasizing that the cash and commitments should not come

inquiries have come from other Christian groups.

The new *Mennonite Your Way Directory V* while similar in format to previous directories, will include several new features. A central theme will be intentional travel—travel with a purpose—with several articles on this topic by Peter Dyck. The *Directory* will include a Mennonite-Your-Wayer profile, ideas for traveling with children, tips for traveling cross-culturally, and a 30-day wellness-as-you-travel calendar.

Directory V will also include a list of persons wanting to swap—houses, campers, quilt patterns, recipes, house plants, etc.

Leon Stauffer said, "We are interested in promoting two things—fellowship and economical travel. It seems that our Mennonite family still wel-

comes a way to cultivate broader friendships and to keep in touch."

Nancy says, "So many Mennonite Your Way participants have written to us, that it's hard to choose the most interesting comments."

A host family wrote, "Our kids enjoy it as much as we do. Our 19-year-old son got a six-year-old boy up and dressed so he could help milk. It was the six-year-old's request with his parent's O.K. We felt like part of our family left when some guests left. This is an excellent way to 'travel' when cows keep us at home."

A 77-year-old grandmother from Seattle, Washington, discovered her Pennsylvania roots and family information with the help of her Pennsylvania hosts. "This never would have been possible," she said, "without Mennonite Your Way."

A family from British Columbia

wrote, "We visited a family on the Oregon Coast who had stopped by to see us last year. It was like seeing old friends. They hosted us royally. We sang together, and shared spiritual joys and concerns. A truly refreshing time!"

Nancy said, "We hear stories of so many people who make long-term, lasting friendships through these contacts; they visit again and the visit is returned. They send Christmas cards to their new friends. They participate with each other in joy and sorrow. This is real church happening and we thank God for this ministry."

Anyone wishing to become part of the Mennonite Your Way hospitality network should request an application form immediately from: **Mennonite Your Way V, Box 1525, Salunga, PA 17538**. Registration closes November 20, 1986. ■

from regular local church budget funds. He urged, "Don't give until it hurts; give until you feel joy!"

On Wednesday Frank Fimiano announced that the Board for Congregational Life planned to give \$1,000 in the evening offering, plus personal gifts from board members. Ray Musser informed the Conference that one investor in the Jacob Engle Foundation was giving \$1,000 in interest earnings in the same offering. Harold Chubb encouraged U.S. people with Canadian money to put it in the offering rather than change it back to U.S. money before returning home.

The momentum was building. People were thinking hard and praying for God's guidance. Phone calls were made to spouses and friends. Plans for the purchase of personal items were abandoned.

The atmosphere was charged with expectancy as the Wednesday evening rally began. When the offering time came, Bishop John Byers gave the final challenge and led in prayer. The ushers collected the money and faith promises (due by September 30) and took their precious cargo away to be counted.

Since it took a long time to tally the results, no announcement was made at the close of the service. Harold Chubb and Lester Fretz decided to keep the totals a closely guarded secret until the morning session on Thursday. That wasn't easy; many people urgently wanted to know!

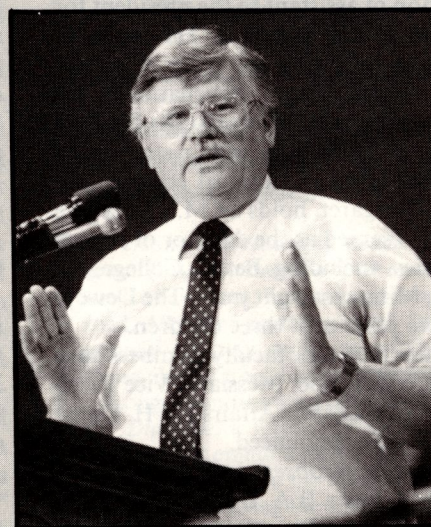
The big moment was finally at hand. Harold Chubb, smiling broadly, shared the good news—the total was \$61,852 in cash and pledges! And more was still coming in.

In the words of the children, who also exceeded their goal of \$250 for books and tapes for Timber Bay Children's Home, "We blasted our goal!" Moderator Alderfer, saying it yet another way, declared, "*We DID Cooperative Ministry!*"

Did you ever try to cheer, and cry, and applaud all at the same time? That's what the Conference crowd did in a contemporary version of saying *Hallelujah*. After things quieted down, Ivan Beachy, Secretary of the Commission on Stewardship and Finance, led in a prayer of praise to our Lord.

I fervently wish that every member of the brotherhood could have been there. It was a moment to be savored for a lifetime.

Surely this is only the firstfruits of the better days ahead in the funding of the regional and general ministries of the church. As all of us continue in the spirit of that great offering, a new day can dawn in Brethren in Christ outreach. Through the Spirit, we are *Energized to Evangelize!*



Lester Fretz presents the challenge to Conference.

Messiah College News

New Vice President, faculty appointed

President D. Ray Hostetter announced the appointment of two new members to Messiah College's administrative team. Mechanicsburg, Pa., resident *Dr. Kenneth Martin* is the new Vice President for Business and Finance, replacing Dr. Robert Hamilton (Grantham congregation), who resigned as of July 1 to pursue other professional interests.

Coming from his post as the assistant director of the Pennsylvania Intergovernmental Council, Martin holds a Ph.D. in rural sociology from Penn State University. He is the husband of Yvonne Martin, Assistant Professor of Business Administration, and the father of four children. The Martins are members of Grantham Church.

Kenneth Martin



Dr. Carlyle Dewey joined the Messiah staff on July 14 in the newly-created position of assistant to the president for personnel and planning. He comes to Messiah following ten years of service with World Vision International, including six years in Brazil. His Ph.D. is in higher education, with a supporting concentration in political science. His wife, Margaret, holds an M.S.L. degree and has served as the director of several libraries, including Bethel College, St. Paul, Minn., for eight years. The Deweys are the parents of three children.

Three part-time faculty members have become full-time, Messiah's Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. H. David Brandt has announced.

Rhonda Jacobsen, Instructor in Psychology, has a B.A. from Wheaton, an M.Ed. and Ed.D. coursework from the University of Illinois, and is presently taking courses at Temple. Her husband, Doug, is Assistant Professor of Church History at Messiah.



Executive Council members of the Messiah College Student Government Association for the 1986-87 year. Mill Hall resident Daryl Bundy (Cedar Heights congregation), president, is shown seated, fourth from left. Other officers are, from left: Carol Lilly, vice president, Nevada, Mo.; Rich Denning, treasurer, Brooklyn, N.Y.; Amy Sherman, chaplain, East Aurora, N.Y.; Chris Young, chief justice, Medford Lakes, N.J.; Laura Kushkowski, activities vice president, Haddam, Conn.; and Kelly Criste, secretary, Leesburg, Va.

Michael Miller, Instructor in Management, is a 1983 alumnus of Messiah, and has an M.B.A. from Shippensburg.

Mary Neagley, Instructor in Speech Communication, has a B.A. from Clarion State University and an M.A. from Western Kentucky University.

Coming as Assistant Professor of Family Studies is *Raeann Hamon*. An '83 Messiah graduate, she has an M.S. and is a Ph.D. candidate at the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

Steve Hayes (Grantham congregation) comes as Instructor in Developmental Studies. He has a B.A. from Wheaton and an M.Ed. from Temple.

An '81 Messiah graduate, *James Krimmel*, C.P.A., comes as Instructor in Accounting. His brother, Jeff, works in the College Advancement Office.

Lawrence Ressler, Assistant Professor of Social Work, comes from Malone College in Ohio. He has a B.A. and a B.S.W. from Eastern Mennonite, an M.S.W. from Temple, and is a Ph.D. candidate at Case Western Reserve.

College Preview Days Planned

Maybe you're a high school senior trying to narrow the choices in deciding which college to attend. Perhaps you are a junior and just want to see what col-

lege might be like. Or, you may be out of high school and would like to check into furthering your education.

In any case, you and your family are welcome to attend a College Preview Day or a Department Day at Messiah this fall. General College Preview Days will be held on Monday, October 13 and on Saturday, October 25. From 9:15 a.m.-2 p.m., visitors will be welcomed, given tours of campus by student guides, treated to lunch with faculty, and given an overview of college life. In addition, admissions, financial aid and curriculum counselors will be available for private interviews.

Department days follow the same schedule, but allow students to receive more specific information regarding the curriculum they might choose. Monday, October 20 is for students interested in education and health, physical education and recreation. Friday, November 7 is for students interested in music and language, literature and fine arts. Friday, November 14 is for those interested in behavioral science, biblical and religious studies, and history and political science.

For more information, please contact Paul Morgan, Assistant Director of Admissions, at (717) 691-6000, or write in care of Messiah College, Grantham, PA 17027.

Dear esteemed Rabbi,

I know, Paul, we haven't been accustomed to such formality in our communication with each other. But somehow I got to thinking about the impact of your life, and as I recalled the extensive training you received at the School of the Great Rabbi, Gamaliel, I just felt like I wanted to recognize your strong grounding in the Scriptures and the law. I, of course, am a common laborer without the benefit of such superb training. My knowledge of the Scriptures and understanding of the gospel comes from a source less formal and less intense—but perhaps just as potent. I could have wished, following my conversion in Rome, to stay on and be taught by the “student of Gamaliel.” But since we both agreed that it was right for me to return to Philemon, I benefited from your teaching for only a brief time before returning to Ephesus.

So how does one learn the Scriptures if not from Christian parents, or a great rabbi, or his esteemed student? If I may be so bold, Paul, I would submit that I believe the answer is in what we have come to refer to as the Sunday school. I'm sure our Sunday school is not all that different from the setting you and others in the Hebrew community in Tarsus must have experienced. The leaders of your synagogue surely took seriously the admonition in the law to teach diligently the ways of God. So maybe the Sunday school is no great innovation, and yet I do know that it is a powerful tool for molding the lives of children and adults.

Fifteen to 20 years ago our Brethren in Christ congregations thought a good bit about the power of the Sunday school. And we put a lot of effort into increasing the size and impact of our Sunday schools. Annual “Forward Enlargement Campaigns” helped us focus our efforts—and our churches experienced remarkable growth. One fine brother during that time became known among us as “Mr. Sunday School.” (Incidentally, he carried your name—and carried it well! He recently published his autobiography and called it *A 20th Century Tentmaker*.) Eventually, however, the Sunday school enthusiasm began to wane. Maybe we got burned out on rally days and “campaigns.” And I guess that's understandable. There was a lot of

intensity in that era of Sunday school focus.

My concern, Paul, is that the possible burnout regarding campaigns and contests may have caused some “heat damage” to the basic components. Those basic components, those powerful qualities that are inherent in the Sunday school—and I'm sure were also a part of your more formal training—are the qualities that shaped my life as a Christian.

One of them and no doubt the most powerful, is the value of a model. Paul, I wish I could shout loud enough to get the attention of every Brethren in Christ Sunday school teacher in every department. If they would all stop and listen I would accent with volume and intensity every word of your admonition to Timothy: **BE THOU an EXAMPLE.** Too many people have accepted the assignment to teach a children's or adult class, but pay little attention to this most powerful teaching tool of all. Teachers who will *live* the truth of their lesson and take time for personal interaction with class members so they can see *how* the truth is lived, will help to make the Sunday school bloom again.

Another of the basic components that makes the Sunday school work so well is the small group dynamic. A group of people, meeting regularly and developing trust through ongoing relationships, is indeed a dynamic setting for learning and growing. But, again Paul, it's distressing how many Sunday school teachers fail to capitalize on this marvelous quality. Every class session needs some time for the meaningful nurturing of relationships. And every teacher should plan for her or his class to meet socially several times a year. It should be obvious that friendship and trust and concern can thus be nurtured so as to provide a stimulating setting for grappling with the truths of Scripture. I am assuming it is this kind of strong relational context which you had in mind when you wrote to the church in Galatia and told them to “bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ.”

Maybe part of the sterility of so many Sunday schools comes from the connotation of the word “school.” People think “teach” and often have a very narrow definition of that word. They pic-

ture a teacher imparting information to students. They envision lectures. (Some—forgive them, Lord—with little preparation, even “read the lesson” to the class!) But Sunday school comes alive when we remember that teaching/preaching is intended to express truth in such a way that interest is stimulated and understanding is nurtured, with the result that children and adults will respond personally to the God who is revealing himself. If every Sunday school teacher approached the class in this spirit, we would have a most effective evangelistic phenomena working for us.

These basic components of the Sunday school—modeling, dynamic relationships, and evangelism—are so potent, I can't imagine a church that fails to utilize them. The format may change and the setting may shift. But it seems to me it would be difficult to come up with any tool more effective than a small group of people with a leader/model whose focus is promoting the accessibility and viability of the Almighty God as he has revealed himself in Jesus of Nazareth. When we look at it this way, the Sunday school is certainly a divine gift to the church. And I suspect, Paul, you would agree. You may even go a step farther and challenge us all to “stir up the gift. . . .”

A learner and a brother,
Onesimus

Contributions invited for *Dialogue* and *Readers Respond*

Persons contributing to *Readers Respond* (letters to the editor) are encouraged to be concise. Letters may be shortened. All letters must be signed. Occasionally we may decide to withhold names due to special circumstances.

Longer contributions are welcomed for *Dialogue*, a forum for readers to express their opinions on a broad range of topics relevant to the mission of the church and to living the Christian life.

Since each article or letter represents the view of the writer, they do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Brethren in Christ Church.

Phoebe's Journal

Going back to work

When I think about "going back to work," I can't help chuckling. Since when have I not been working? Not only is being a wife, mother, and homemaker "work" in the fullest sense of the word, but in addition to filling those roles, I've also been working part-time from my home ever since I quit my last "regular job." Perhaps it would be more accurate to describe my process of "going back to work" as finding employment away from home.

I've been job-hunting—not in desperation, but in a somewhat leisurely fashion and with the hope of finding the perfect job to fit my skills, training, interests, experience, and schedule. I know that such a job may not exist, but I'd also like to believe that with the right mixture of assertiveness and patience on my part, I can find something that will suit me well at this stage of my life.

I haven't had much experience in the job market or with job-hunting. Even though I'm not really a "displaced homemaker," I understand the feelings of women who, after years of staying home and raising children, find themselves out of touch and unable to compete in the job market. It's easy to be intimidated by all the high-powered strategies that the media say are necessary to land a good job. My tendency toward self-depreciation makes it difficult for me to feel confident about assuring potential employers that I'm the right person for the job.

Not only do I have to battle my fears of the job-hunting process and shore up my confidence in myself and my abilities, but I'm sorting through other issues as well. For me, finding a good job is closely related to my need for identity

and self-fulfillment. I need to work, to define my identity in roles other than wife or mother. Those are roles which are primarily determined by my relationship to other people, not by something I do on my own merit. For some women, being wife and mother is fulfillment enough, but for others it's not. I'm one of the latter, but I struggle with feeling that it is selfish to want personal fulfillment.

It occurs to me that most men are more than husband and father, we rarely suggest that they are selfish. Rather, we assume that they should pursue a career or vocation. True, men usually work to support their families, but in so doing they achieve an identity of their own. While many men might like to be freed of the pressure to work so hard, most would probably also agree that their work provides them with an individual identity. Besides, fulfillment is not by definition selfish. An integral part of my need for meaningful work is a strong service motivation. I want work that helps rather than exploits.

I'm struck, however, by how the issues I face are peculiar to middle-class people. I don't have to work to make ends meet. I've been able to stay home, and therefore I've been available to care for my own children, to attend school functions, to volunteer at church and school, to come and go as I wish during the day. Even though I have been working, I've set my own hours and my schedule has been flexible enough most of the time to allow for interruptions. When I consider taking a job that requires my presence at an office a certain number of hours a day, I feel like I'm losing something that has been very valuable to me.

Yet I'm well aware that most people in the world simply can't think about the

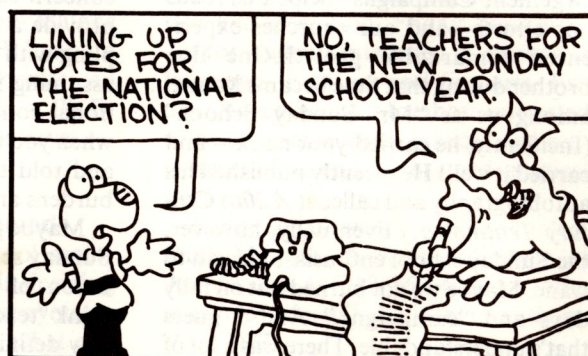
things I think about because they're too busy trying to survive at a most basic level. In fact, if I were to talk about the dilemmas I face in looking for work among many women in the town where I live, they'd probably stare at me as if I were speaking a foreign language. I and many other North Americans are extremely fortunate to have the luxury of asking questions and making choices.

Because I have the luxury of choice that many people don't have, I feel responsible to make good choices. I feel like I'm at some kind of crossroads, and the choices I make about work at this particular time are especially important. I also feel the pressure many women in my generation and economic class feel to do everything well—be a good wife and mother, keep a spotless house, have a satisfying career, etc. Some women seem to manage it all successfully, but most of us have to make choices, set priorities, and allow ourselves to fall short of the "superwoman" ideal. Our challenge is to be comfortable with our individual choices and to resist all the outside pressures to do things differently. While we can benefit from other people's ideas and experience, ultimately we have to make our own choices based on our own needs and the needs of our families.

My rambling thoughts on the subject of work aren't complete or always coherent, but they represent how significant this issue is for me. I haven't even specifically mentioned how my Christian values affect my thinking about work; it seems clear, however, that one reason I think so much about it is my faith. I want to "walk worthy of the vocation to which I am called"—whatever that may be.

Phoebe

Pontius' Puddle



the "poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame." And therefore, the kids strategized to visit as many poor and downwardly mobile subdivisions in the area as they visited rich and affluent subdivisions. This brought them into both the segregated city housing projects of our region as well as into wealthier subdivisions. All in all, the group distributed over 1,100 pieces of literature, rapping on every door. A special invitation was given to everyone to an introductory meeting which was held on June 29 to acquaint interested people with the mission and vision of Gwinnett Brethren in Christ Church. And on June 29, nine new persons attended. The introductory meeting was a great success.

But not all the week involved strenuous work. There was a trip to Stone Mountain for a picnic, to "White Water" for a day of swimming in the 95° weather, and, of course, a full day at Six Flags for all the roller coastering and cotton candy 25 kids could stomach!

And finally, it should also be said that other benefits besides the evangelism experience and recreational fun came from the week together. This was also a time for the Cross Roads group to grow together in love and understanding. Some homes housed as many as 11 people for the week. And when people are that close for that long, they have no choice but to attempt to be understanding of their brother and sister! Many friendships and relationships were strengthened and healed during the week. And the joy that was experienced as the group united to share in the work of the Lord is one that will be long remembered.

In closing, the prayer of our small fellowship is that other established congregations will consider such co-operative efforts in the future. It is truly an effective way to support the efforts of young church plantings throughout the conference. Evangelism can be fun!

Chuck Anderson is pastor of the Gwinnett Brethren in Christ Church in Lawrenceville, Georgia.

Editorial

The jaws of life

The acrid smoke billowed from under the hood of the car. We couldn't see evidence of an accident, but four fire trucks and a rescue vehicle were on the late-evening scene. Meanwhile, six firemen tried their hardest to pry open the hood as a dozen others stood by, hoses ready. A growing crowd of spectators watched the curbside scene.

Obviously none of the firemen grew up in a big city, where any nine-year-old kid can pop a hood and swipe a battery in less than a minute. I was amazed that with all the prying, pounding, and pushing, the hood refused to budge. Finally, one corner was pried up, and a hose inserted, spraying water on the engine, which by now had just about stopped smoking. But the efforts to pry open the hood continued. After several minutes, I turned to Linda and said with a chuckle, "I feel an editorial coming on." Seeing her quizzical look, I admitted, "Well, I don't have it all together yet, but trust me—there's one here somewhere."

Finally, exasperated, two men carried over the "jaws of life," a generator-driven tool aptly named since it is often used to free persons trapped in accidents. Putting the generator down in front of the car, one of the men pulled the starter rope, with no results. Another pull, then another. Not a sputter. Attention began to shift from opening the hood to trying to start the generator. Several more vigorous attempts; then a second fireman took over. His efforts were equally futile. A third man moved in, took off his hat, knelt down, and gave that starter cord ten furious yanks. Nothing. Tools were brought over from one of the trucks, and the men began tinkering with the generator.

(By now I was getting a little embarrassed on behalf of the fire fighters. Here's this great piece of machinery, and they couldn't get it started. Suppose there was someone trapped inside the car, bleeding to death.)

In the middle of all of this, one of the firemen picked up the pry bar and began working on the hood again. I turned to Linda and said, "Let's see who wins the race—the crowbar or the generator." Well, in a few minutes the hood was up and more water was sprayed on the by-now-cooling engine. And the "jaws of life" was carried ignominiously back to the truck, the generator having not turned over once. And as we walked home, I said to Linda, "There's the editorial: a parable about some of our church machinery."

(1) While nearly everyone else's attention was focused on the expensive piece of equipment which failed to function as desired, one or two persons with a simple pry bar, applying pressure in the right place, popped the hood open. Similarly, we may become enamored with the latest and fanciest program (for evangelism, to cite one example) and often spend so much time and energy trying to get the machinery running that we lose sight of the goal and don't get the actual work done. Meanwhile, others with very simple tools are effective because they are putting to work the tools that they have.

(2) On the other hand, sometimes a simple pry bar is just not adequate. The "jaws of life" is an important tool which ought to be available and kept in top shape. If it had started, it would have done the job in short order. I had to wonder if the problem was in the generator or in the operators. Again, a parable of our spiritual tools and programs, which should be clean, sharpened, and well-oiled . . . with us knowing how to use them. A phrase used at General Conference should become a watchword for each of our churches: "Every congregation a seminary." That is, every congregation ought to be training believers and engaging them in the work of believers: witnessing and serving in the name of Jesus and in the power of the Spirit.

While this "parable" will never make it into Scripture, it confronts me with two questions: Am I focusing on ministry or machinery? And how well am I equipped to carry out my mission?

What does it say to you?

G



Responses to home visits ranged from cool curiosity to definite interest. Others shared their hurts and struggles and requested followup by the pastor.

stressed from this Scripture. First, evangelism, when seen in terms of simply inviting people into the kingdom, is not all that scary or frightening. In fact, it can be quite fun. There was some noticeable apprehension on the faces of many as they considered the prospect of meeting strange southern faces at unfamiliar southern doors. But we emphasized the fact that in Georgia, people would be quite receptive to sharp looking young teens (some in ties and jams) sharing about a brand new church starting in Gwinnett. And all the people we met, from start to finish, were true examples of southern hospitality.

But the second idea stressed was that church evangelism must be for *all* people, not simply for the rich and the well-to-do. Gwinnett County is a wealthy area of tremendous growth. For the past two years it has been the fastest growing county in the U.S. and is currently listed 4th among the nation's top ten in terms of total personal income growth. Sound like a great place to start a new church? Well, it is. But Jesus' commandment in Luke 14 emphasizes to us that we must also invite

continued on page 31

“Roller coasters and evangelism”

by Chuck Anderson

Question: What does cotton candy, evangelism, roller coasters and a new church planting in Georgia all have in common? The answer is found in a challenging and innovative idea of Dale Engle, pastor of the Cross Roads Brethren in Christ Church, Mount Joy, Pennsylvania.

During a church growth dinner in October 1985, Dale was struggling with two seemingly unrelated questions. How, on the one hand, could his congregation be more effective in assisting the efforts of the new church plantings throughout the Atlantic Conference? And, on the other hand, where could he and the youth advisors in his congregation send their youth group of 25 kids for a summer vacation trip that would not only entertain them, but also challenge them in the work and efforts of the gospel!

The result of these ponderings was a fresh and innovative idea—why not send the youth group to Atlanta, Georgia, to do evangelism work with the new Gwinnett County congregation and, on their “free” time, allow the kids to visit some of the vacation “hot spots” in the Atlanta

area. The Atlanta congregation was thrilled with the idea, so dates were set and plans immediately made for what became a week of “roller coasters and evangelism.”

After a few months of preparation in the theology and methods of door-to-door evangelism, the group arrived on June 16. The first day was dedicated totally to business . . . the hows and whys of door-to-door evangelism. Jeff Harlow shared that new church evangelism was simply a “piece of pie,” involving prayer, invitation, and enthusiasm. The governing Scripture for the week was in Jesus' parable of the great banquet, Luke 14:15-24. Two ideas were

The kids used some of their acting, singing, and clowning skills on a “witness parade” through the park. Many reported that in terms of their own growth, this was the most significant experience of the week.

